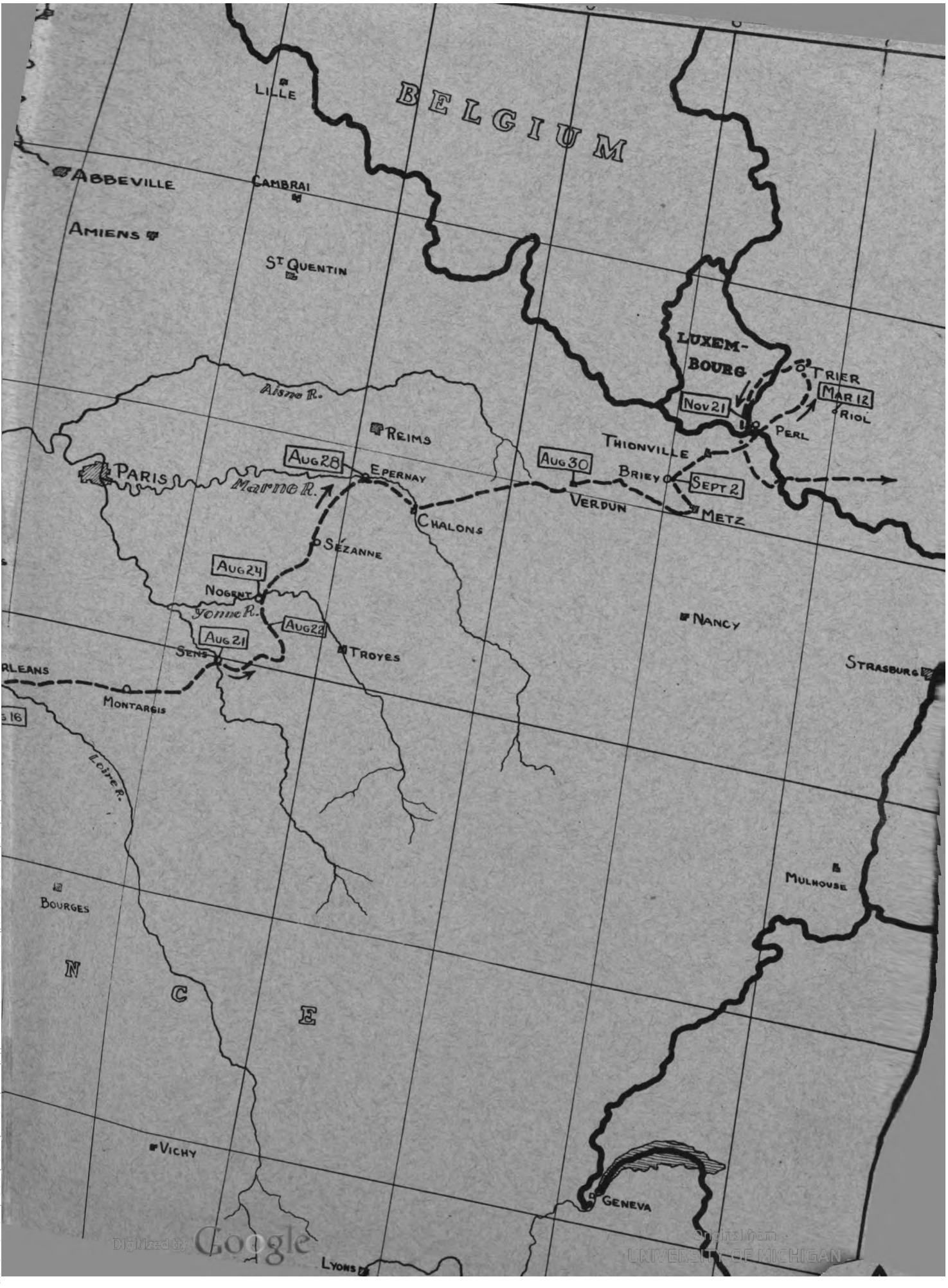


3RD CAVALRY
RECONNAISSANCE
SQUADRON

"WITH THE 3rd ACROSS FRANCE"







**The 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mecz.) in
World War II 9 August 1944 to 9 May 1945**

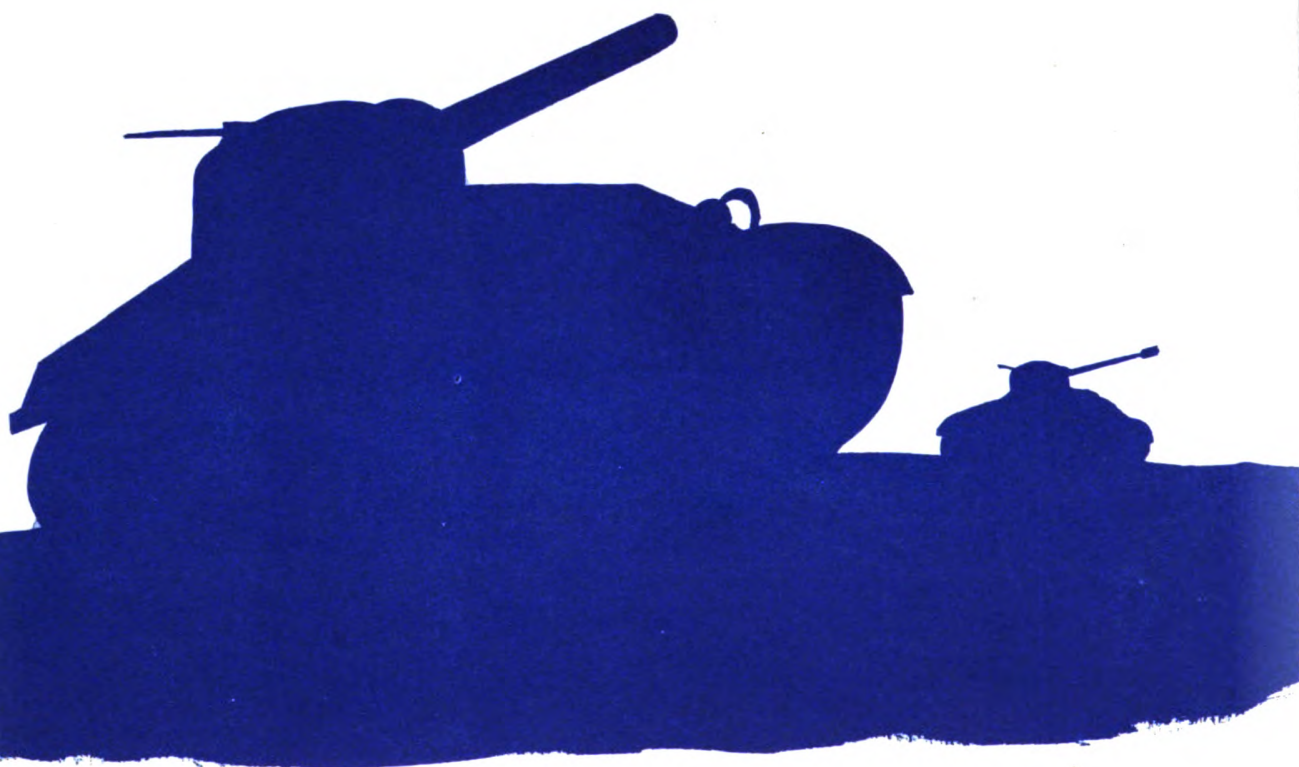
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Dedicated To
GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON
American and Soldier

General Patton commanded the 3rd Cavalry (Horse) at Fort Meyer, Virginia, parent to the 3rd Regiment which in turn became the 3rd Group of the 3rd and 43rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons (Mecz). As Commander of the 3rd Army he earned the respect and admiration of all who were fortunate enough to have served under him. There are many who owe their lives to his bold and aggressive tactics.

"Brave Rifle"





HEADQUARTERS XX CORPS

APO 340

19 May 1945

SOLDIERS OF XX CORPS, THROUGHOUT EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN TO V-E DAY

We have fought together through trying days to gain the long-sought victory.

The trail of your accomplishments is blazed on the map of Europe and engraved imperishably in the pages of history. Through France, Germany on into Austria you forced your way, thrusting the vaunted German forces aside.

Fighting across 18 major rivers and scores of smaller streams you have accomplished some of the longest sustained marches in the history of warfare. You have liberated or conquered more than 31,000 square miles of territory, including 600 cities and towns and 4,000 inhabited places. You have captured 540,000 enemy soldiers and killed or wounded at least 89,000 others. ANGERS, CHARTRES, FONTAINEBLEAU, MELUN, MONTEREAU, CHATEAU - TIERRY, EPERNAY, REIMS, VERDUN, METZ, TRIER, SAARLAUTERN, KAISERLAUTERN, WIESBADEN, KASSEL, WEIMAR, JENA, REGENSBURG, BRAUNAU, LINZ and STEYR were but milestones in your zone of advance.

The pathway to our goal has been costly and the blood of dead and wounded comrades marks our way to the liberation of Europe. Let us remember their sacrifices as we exalt in the victory of our arms. Let us prove to them by our conduct now that they did not die in vain; that we have the fortitude to put aside selfish interests and carry on with firm justice and resolute determination to irrevocably crush the Nazi menace and establish freedom and right in war-torn Europe. We have won the war. Let us now win the peace. We shall not for an instant lower our guard. Through our conduct, dress, bearing and example, we shall always maintain the high standards of a well trained and a well disciplined Corps.

No one can say that any one member of our winning team played a greater part in the victory than another. Some fought valiantly on the field of battle, coming to actual grips with the enemy forces. Others performed brilliantly in administrative capacities. None could have succeeded without the combined efforts of all. Our success was due to teamwork and cooperation. All honor goes to that team and the members thereof. To the team came the victory.

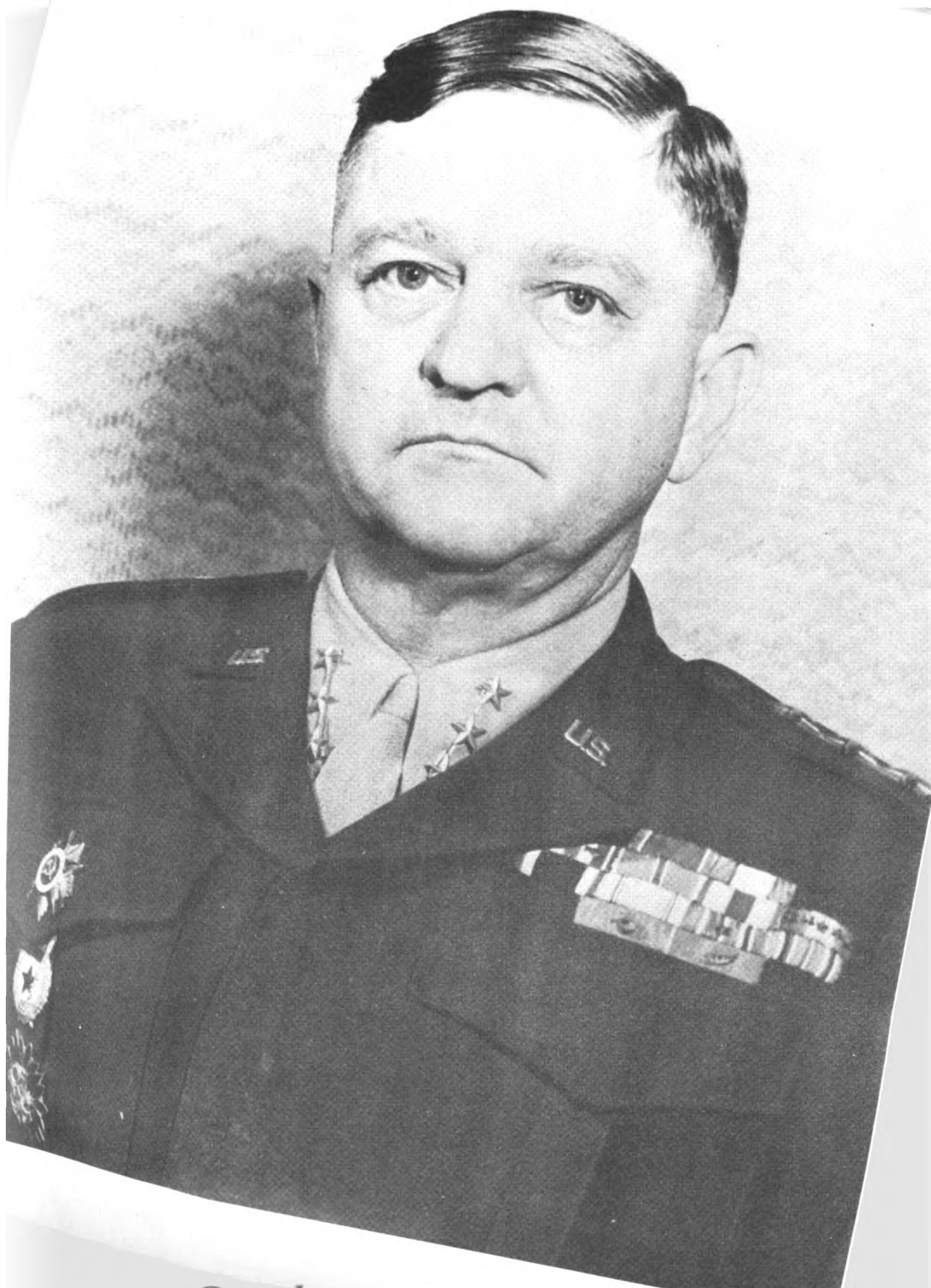
During this war I have received decorations and promotion—honors that you, through your heroic efforts have won for me. My proudest boast, however, will always be that I have had the honor of commanding you in combat. I desire nothing better than that you continue your mighty victories over our remaining enemies and carry the spirit of the gracious conqueror back to other walks of life.

If I am privileged to lead you against the Japanese barbarians, I have complete faith in the outcome and know that we will not fail our Nation in the moments of stress.

/s/ Walton H. Walker

/t/ WALTON H. WALKER

Lieutenant General, United States Army
Commanding

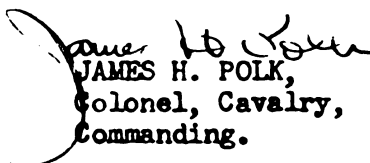


HEADQUARTERS, THIRD CAVALRY GROUP
TUTZING, BAVARIA

The Third Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, as part of the Third Cavalry Group, first came under my command during the battle for the approaches to Metz. From those bitter days when you cavalymen were deployed as infantry in the foxholes before Fort Driant to the last wild dash deep into Austria, I was proud to count you as part of my command.

For four campaigns of brilliant, gruelling, slashing combat you led the way, blazing a path that the infantry might follow. With never a backward step, you attacked again and again, not counting the cost but exacting a high price each time your ranks were thinned. The record is a proud one, the Third Squadron of the Third Cavalry of the Third Army, the shock troops of the running fight, the spearhead of spearheads.

May you continue in the traditions you upheld so well. I saw you fight and I saw you die, and I say there is none finer. Brave Rifles!


JAMES H. POLK,
Colonel, Cavalry,
Commanding.



A complete recording of the noble and heroic deeds which constitute the history of the 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron would need no introduction. Unfortunately there were many outstanding deeds of heroism and many brilliant tactical feats which escaped the pen of the recorder. For those of us who witnessed these actions no reminder is necessary. It is sufficient for me to say that it has been an honor to serve with you in training and in combat overseas. I am proud to have been one of you. Brave Rifles good luck wherever you may be.

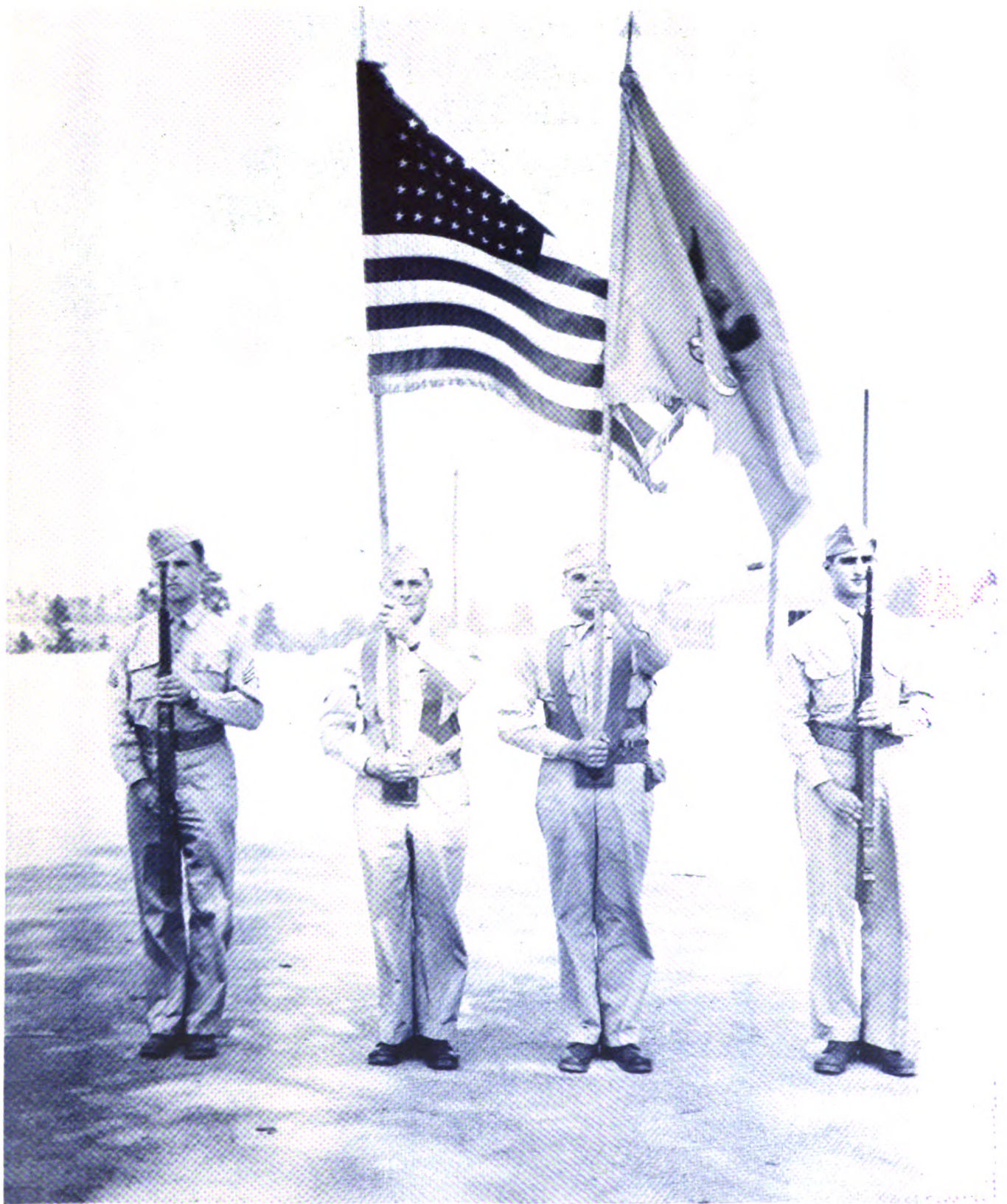


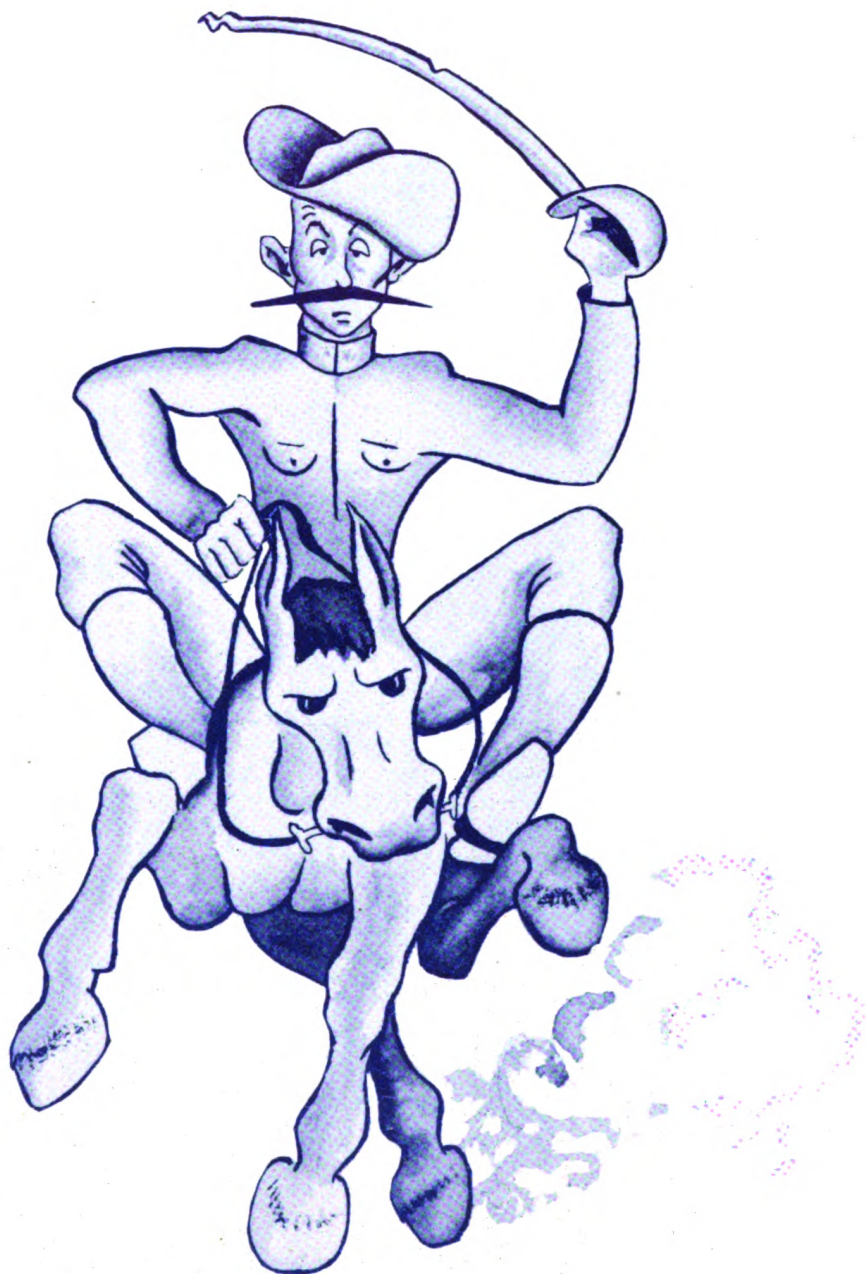
Marshall Wallach
Lt. Col., 3rd Cavalry
Commanding



- I. Early History of the 3rd Sq.
- II. Training and P. O. M.
- III. 9 Aug. 1944—VE Day
 - A. Normandy to the Moselle
 - B. The Saar—Moselle Triangle
 - C. Trier—Riol
 - D. Across Germany
 - E. Southeast to Austria
- IV. Decorations and Awards
- V. Special Events
- VI. Troop Histories
- VII. Austria to New York
- VIII. Troop Roster







Early History of the 3rd Squadron

More than a hundred years ago, on May 19, 1846, a regiment of mounted rifles—the original Third Cavalry—was formed. The new unit was designed as a mobile striking force to be used in the Mexican War which was then in progress. In less than a year after its organization it was part of an expeditionary force whose mission was the capture of Mexico City, the enemy capital. The mounted rifles fought at Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Contreras, at Churubusco, and, finally, spearheading the attack of the entire force, they stormed the heights at Chapultepec, the gateway to Mexico City. As the smoke of battle slowly drifted from the ridge, the regiment was assembled before General Winfield Scott, the expeditionary force commander, and received from him the following tribute. He said,

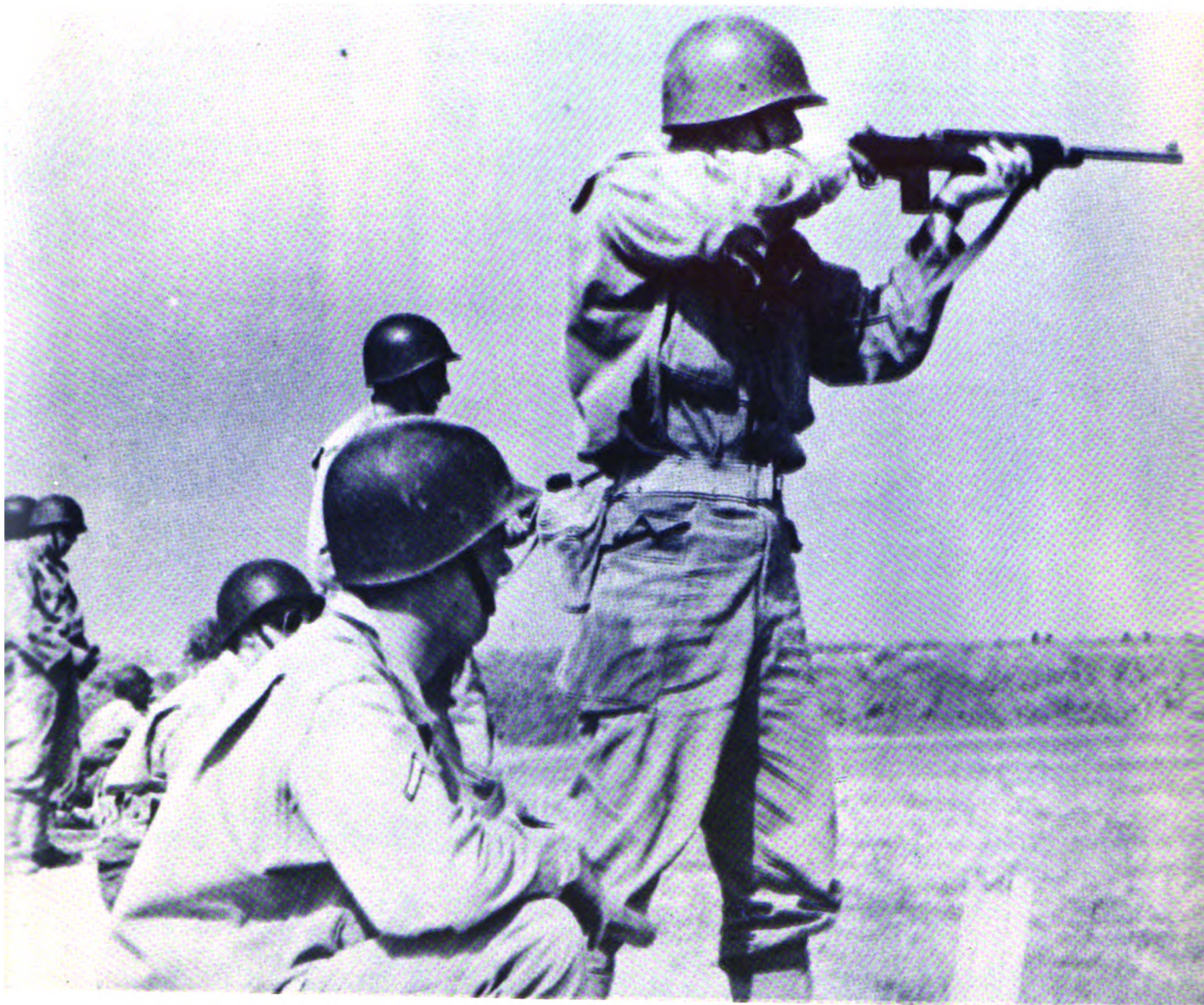
"Brave Rifles, Veterans; you have been baptized in blood and fire and have come out steel."

Victorious, the unit returned to the States with the regimental insignia the Third Cavalry wears today emblazoned on its standard.

Almost until the turn of the century the Third Cavalry was engaged in the continuous Indian Wars which raged from Michigan to New Mexico, from Alabama to Montana. They fought the Cheyennes, the Utes, the Blackfeet, the Apaches under wily Geronimo. They were in the famous battle of the Little Big Horn against the Sioux. During the Civil War they held great stretches of the frontier protecting the western flank while the bulk of the Union forces were employed in the East.

In 1898, with the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, the Third sailed for Cuba and fought at Santiago and San Isidro. No sooner had they returned from this campaign than they set sail again; this time for the Philippines where they fought through the Luzon campaign of 1900. In 1916 the regiment was in action again on the Mexican border, fighting under General Pershing to subdue Pancho Villa. They remained active in the spasmodic hostilities in this area during the Great War. After the Armistice in 1918 the Third Cavalry was moved to its permanent station, Fort Meyer, Virginia, where it became known as "The President's Own". Under such regimental commanders as Colonels George S. Patton, Jr. and Jonathan M. Wainwright, the Third outdid the Hussars and Dragoons of Europe in dash and splendor. But soon, with the rumbling tanks and screaming dive-bombers of the Nazi Wehrmacht came the end of prancing horse cavalry. The regiment combined with the Eleventh Cavalry in 1942 to become the 10th Armored Division.

On March 15, 1943, at Camp Gordon, Georgia, the Third Cavalry was reactivated as a mechanized Cavalry Regiment. Under the command of Colonel Frederick W. Drury, it trained in record time. On November 3, 1943, the regiment was redesignated the Third Cavalry Group composed of the Third and Forty-third Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons (Mechanized). The former squadron, under the command of Lt. Col. Marshall Wallach, inheriting the traditions of ninety odd years of service, moved rapidly toward its proper place on the field of battle. By early winter maneuvers in Tennessee were over, by spring final firing on the ranges at Fort Jackson was completed, and on June 1, 1944, in little more than a year after its date of activation, the squadron was aboard HMT "Scythia" bound for Liverpool.

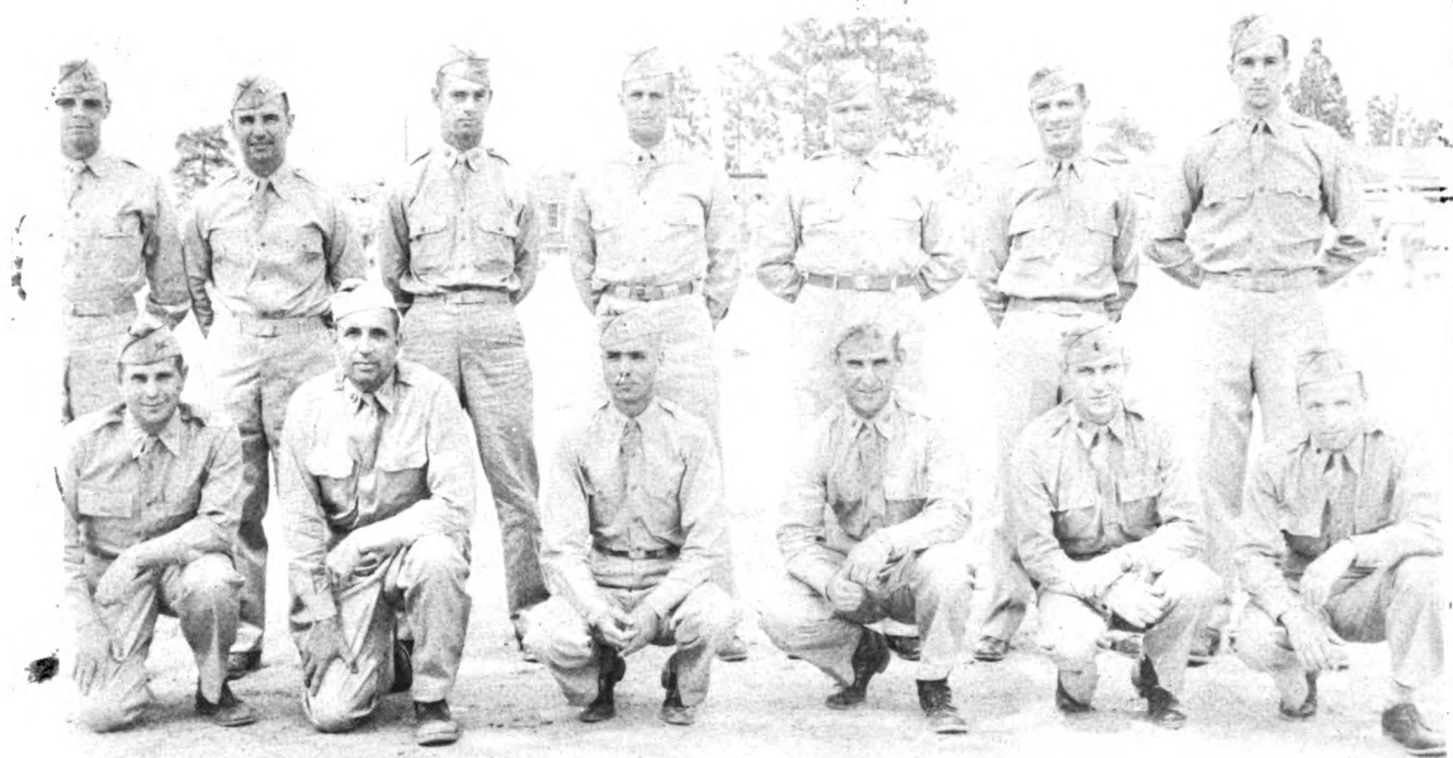


Training and P. O. M.





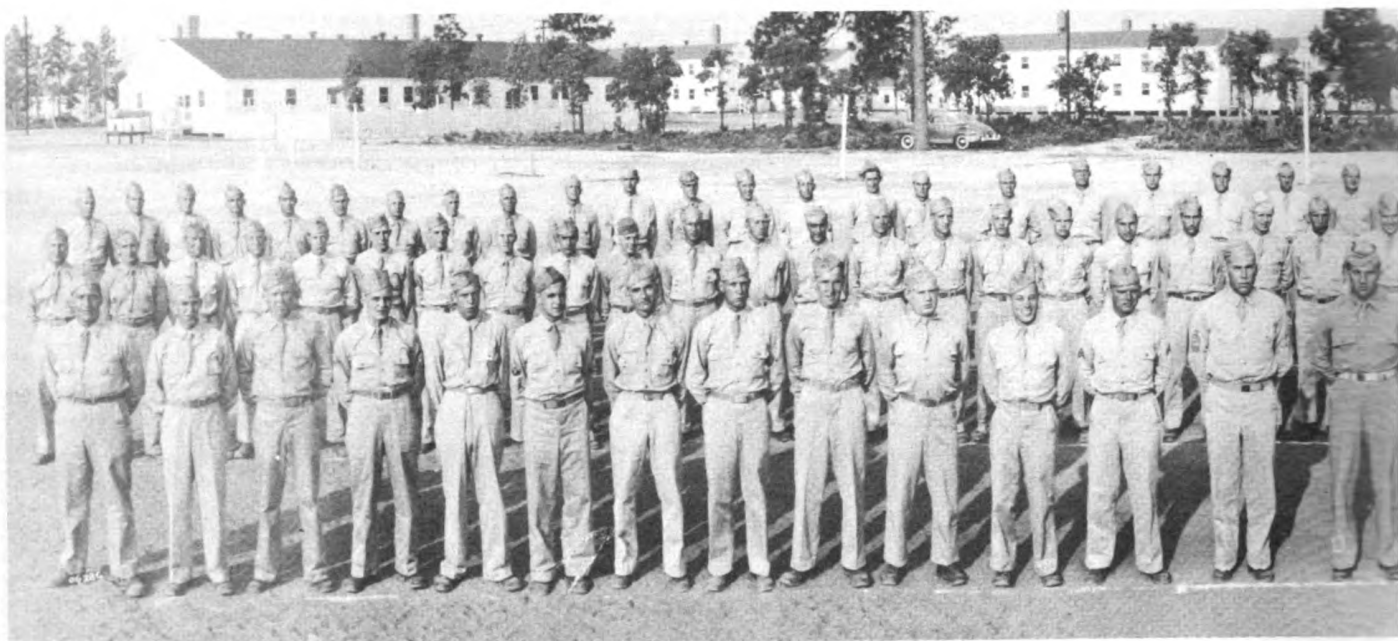




SQUADRON STAFF BEFORE DEPARTURE FOR E.T.O.

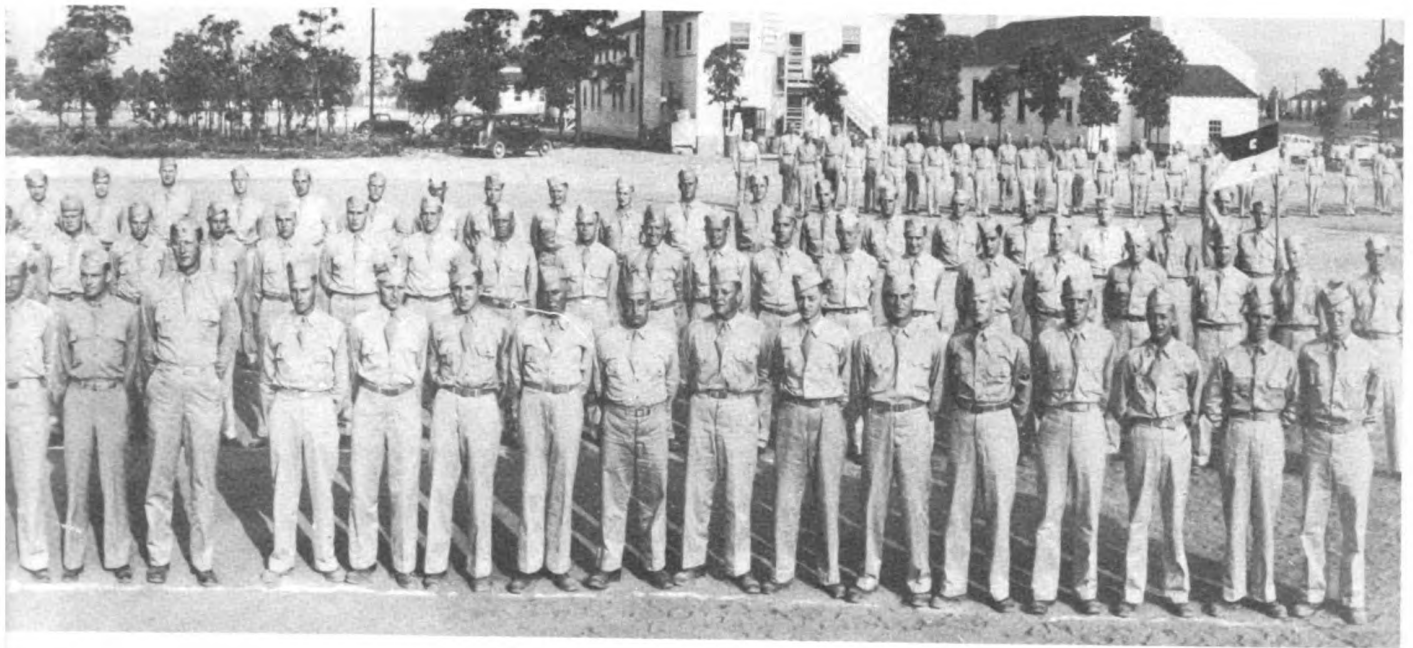
First row (left to right): Capt. Filizola, Capt. Rihl, Lt. Moriarty, W.O.J.G. Robidart, W.O.J.G. Harvey, W.O.J.G. Archer

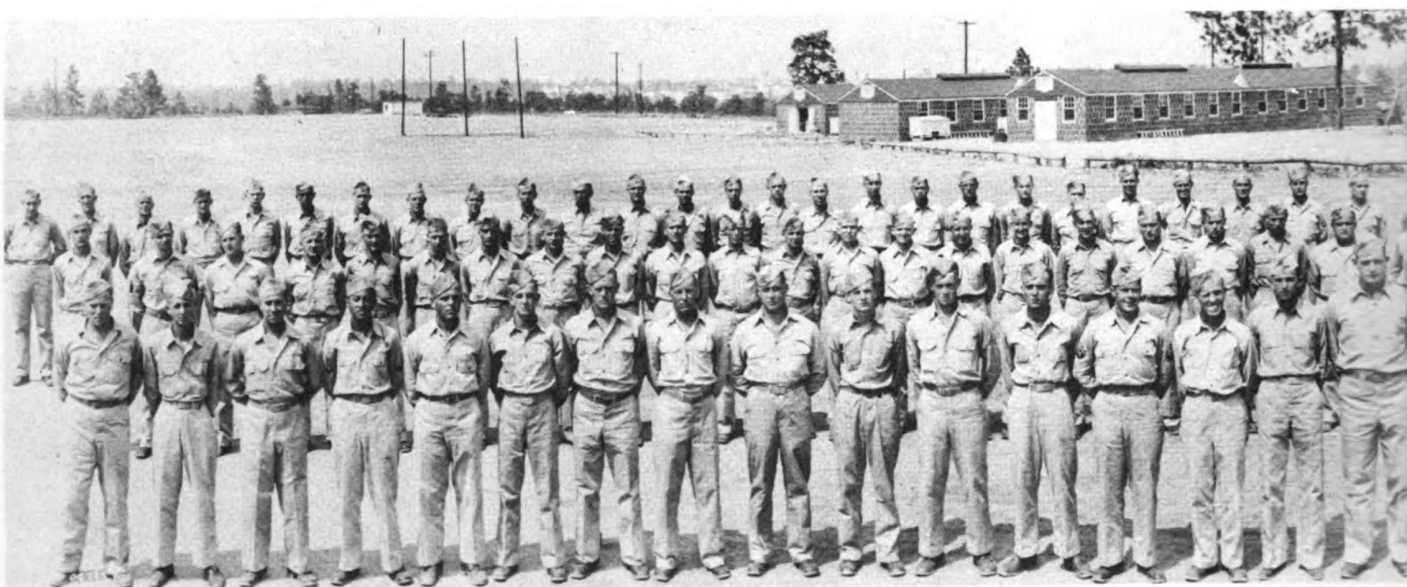
Second row: Capt. Voorhies, Capt. Doran, Maj. Vaughn, Lt. Col. Wallach, Maj. Marron, Capt. Witten, Capt. Robbins.



"A" TROOP

Capt. William O. Howk
1st Lt. Christian Weber
1st Lt. Daniel Callahan
2nd Lt. Phillip S. Eddy
2nd Lt. Oscar H. Williams

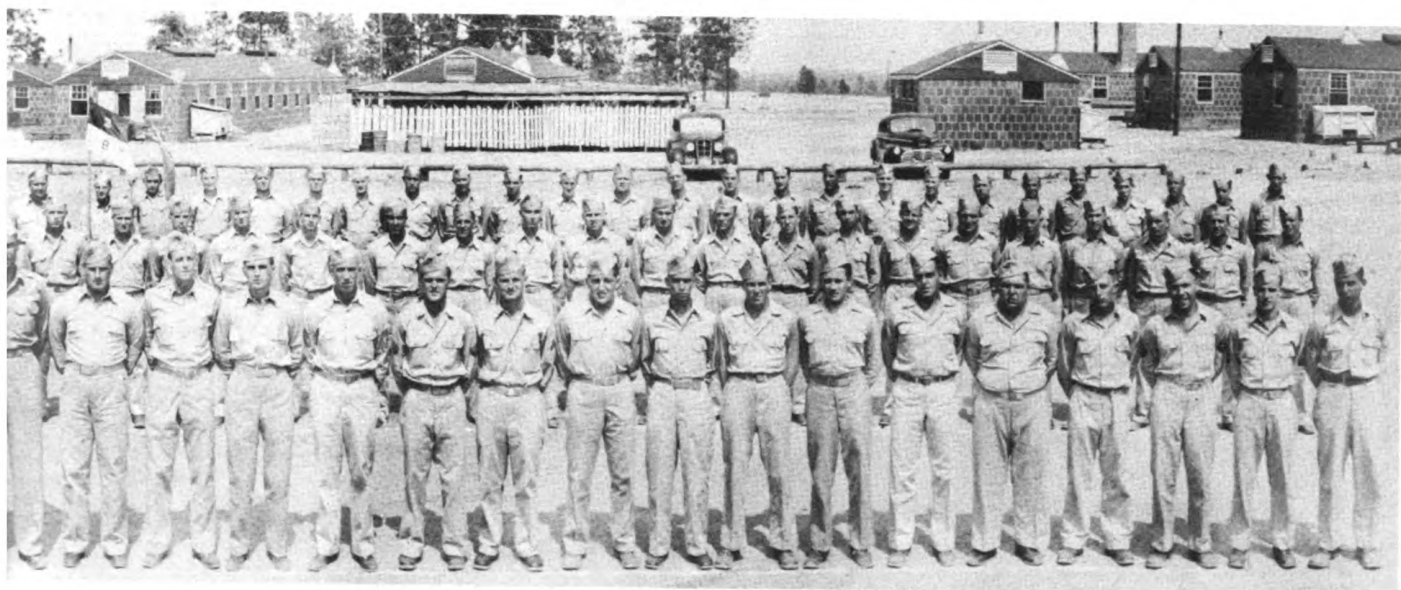


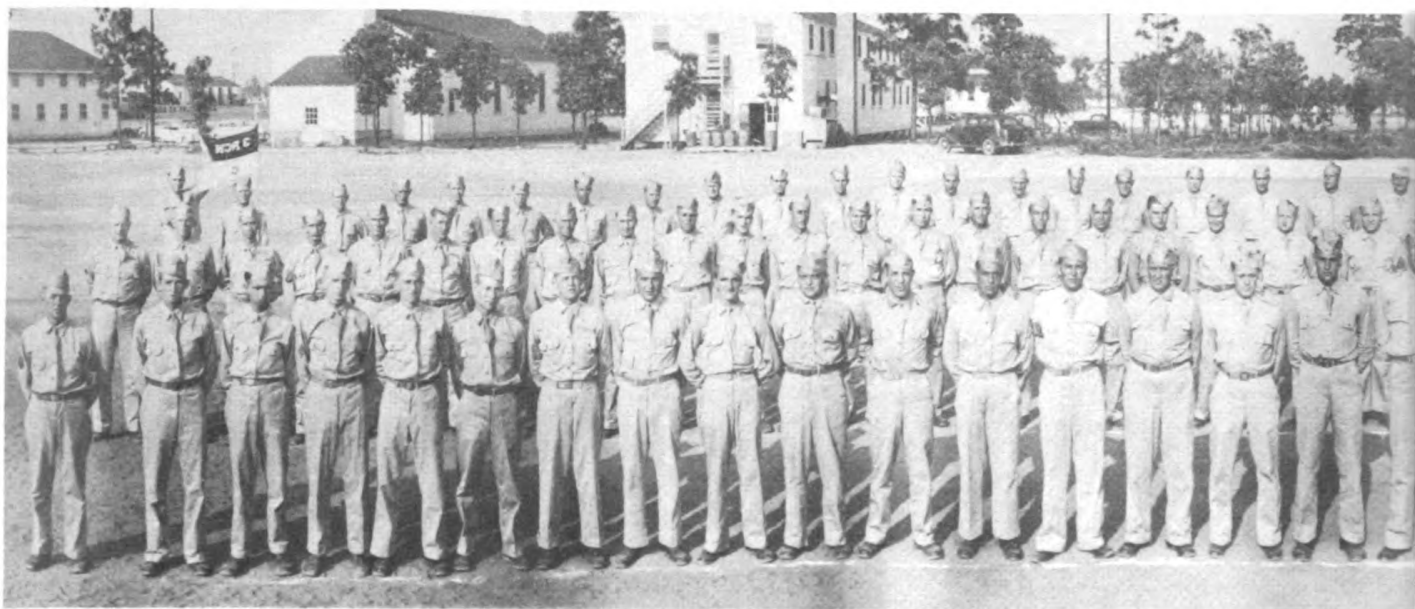


“B” TROOP

May 1944

**Capt. Ivan McCracken
1st Lt. James Jackson
1st Lt. Harold T. Richards
1st Lt. Hoyt E. Barron
2nd Lt. David S. Gay
2nd Lt. Richard E. Maloy**

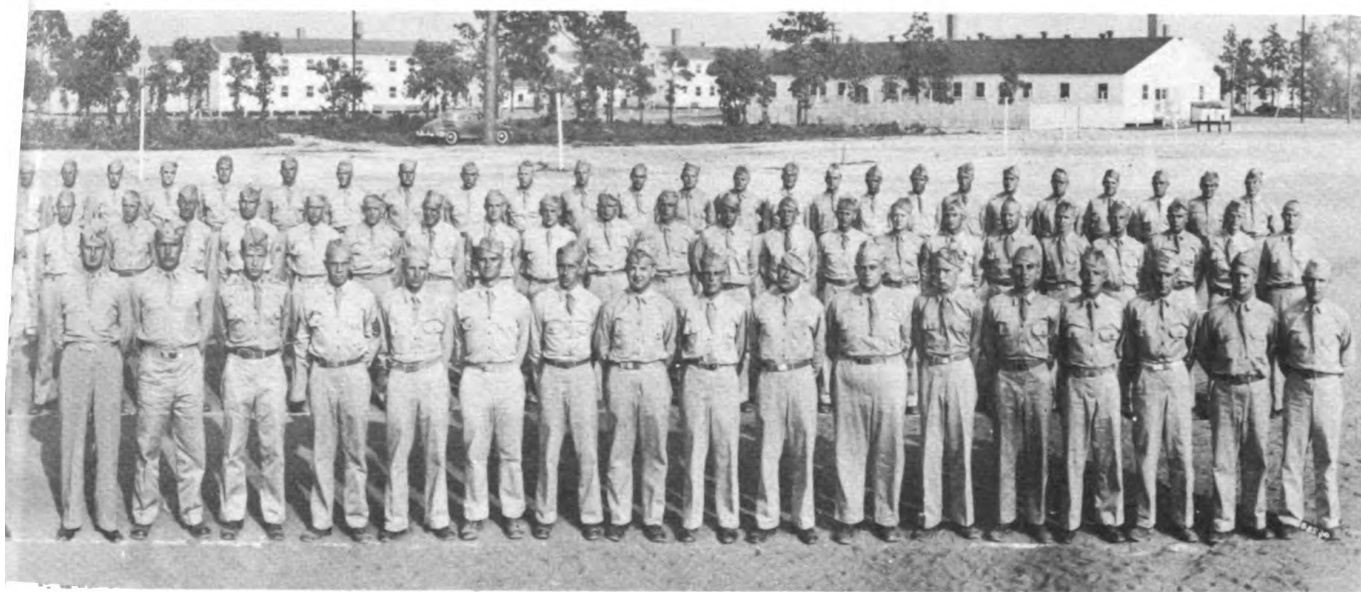


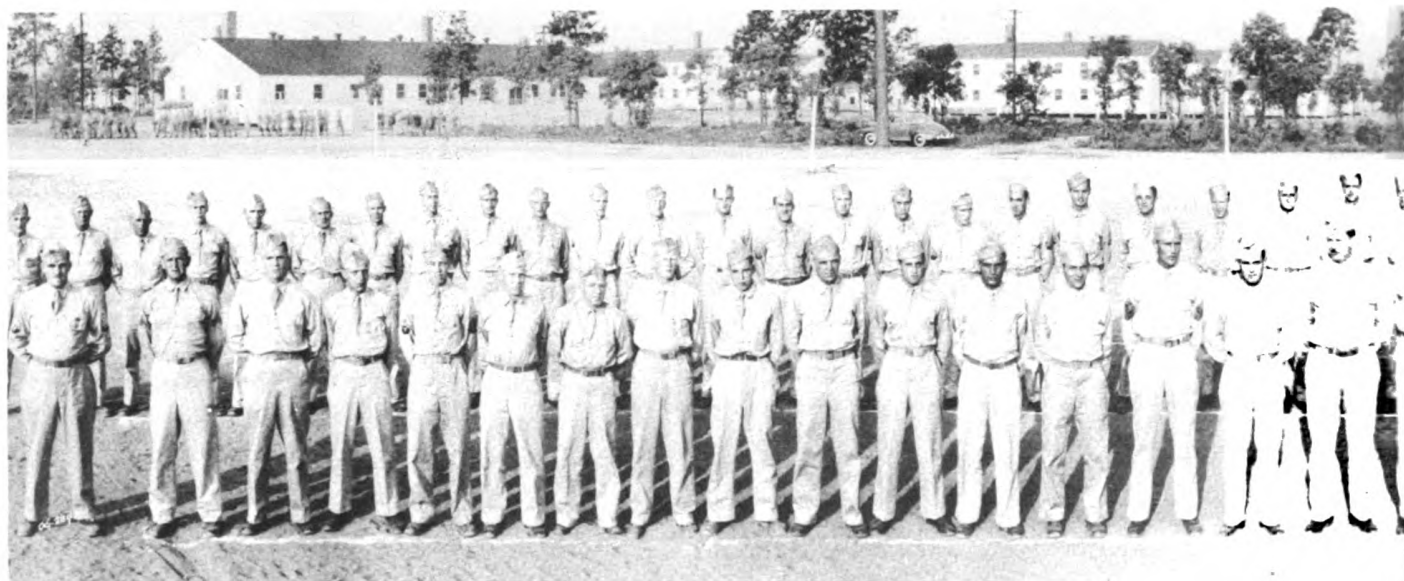


"C" TROOP

May 1944

Capt. Thomas N. Downing
1st Lt. Clarke T. Baldwin
1st Lt. Francis J. Hennesey
1st Lt. Ernest C. Seibel
2nd Lt. Frederick A. McLaughlin
2nd Lt. Charles H. Kirkpatrick

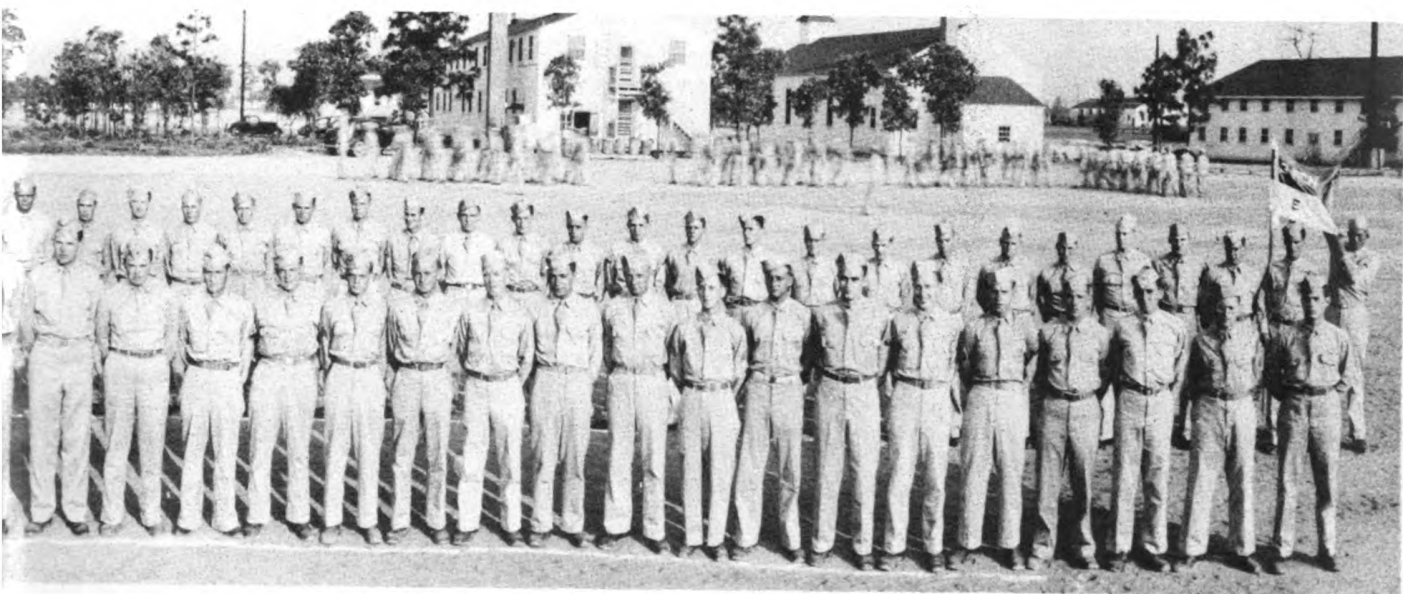


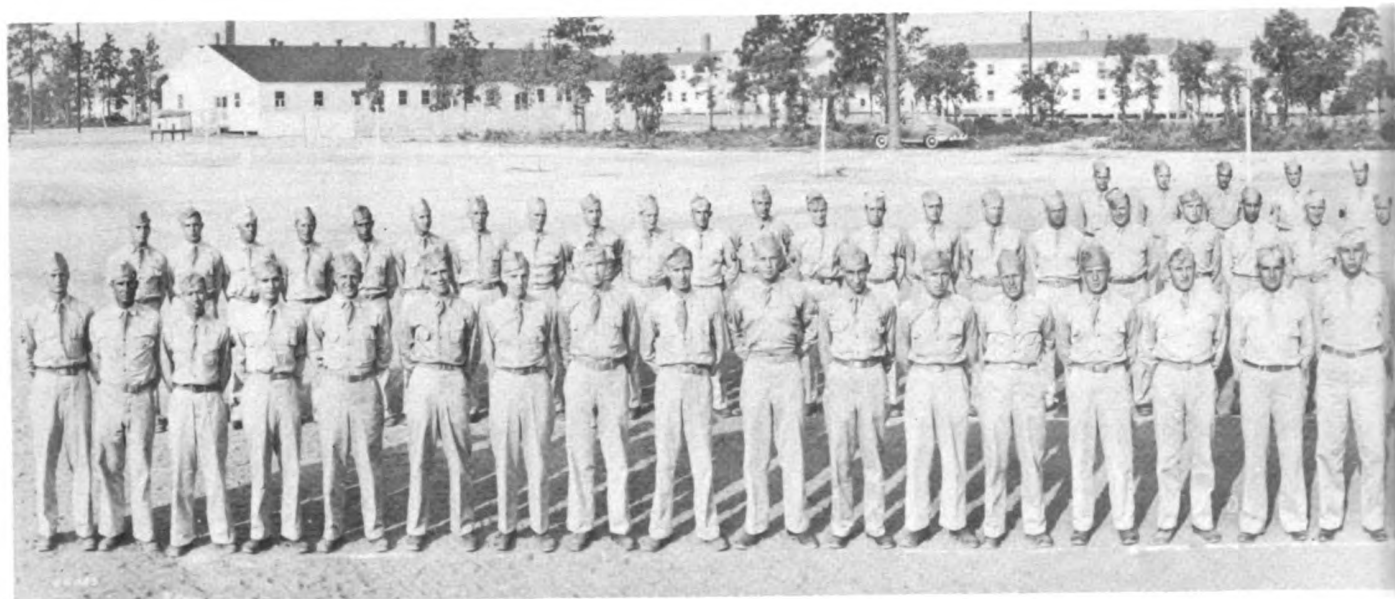


“E” TROOP

May 1944

**Capt. George C. Fullencamp
1st Lt. Lee C. Kelley
2nd Lt. Carl I. Delau
2nd Lt. Richard C. Zimmer
2nd Lt. William B. Nicolas**

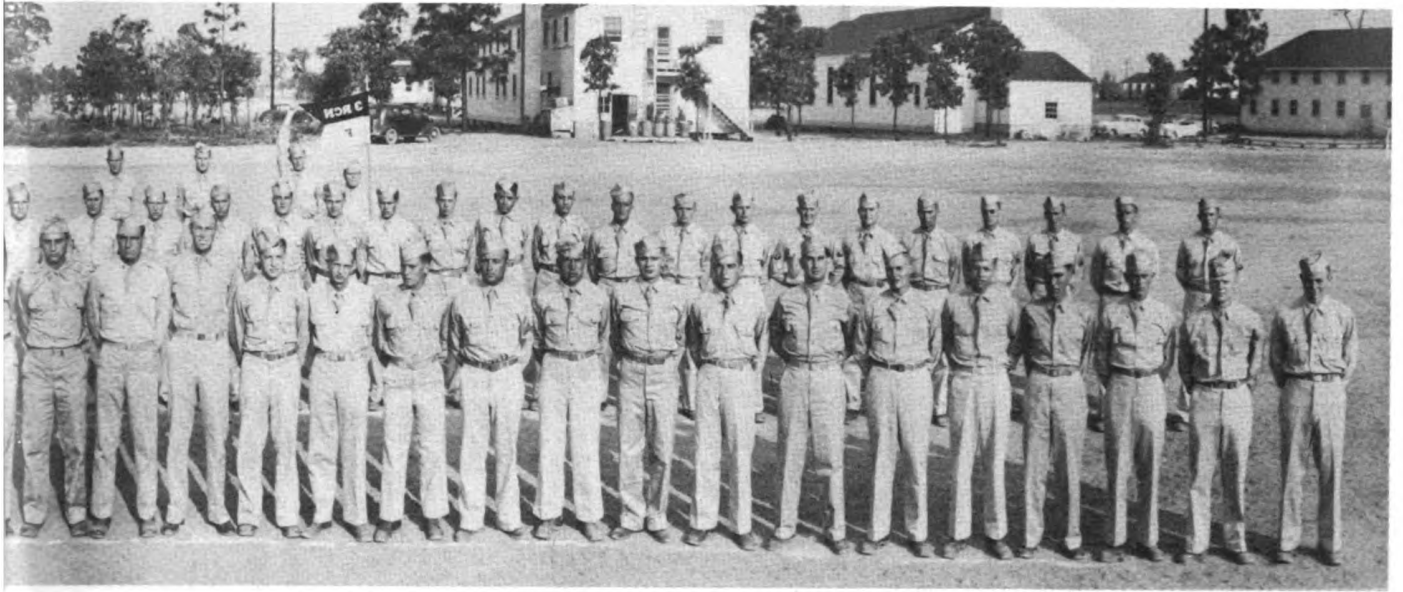


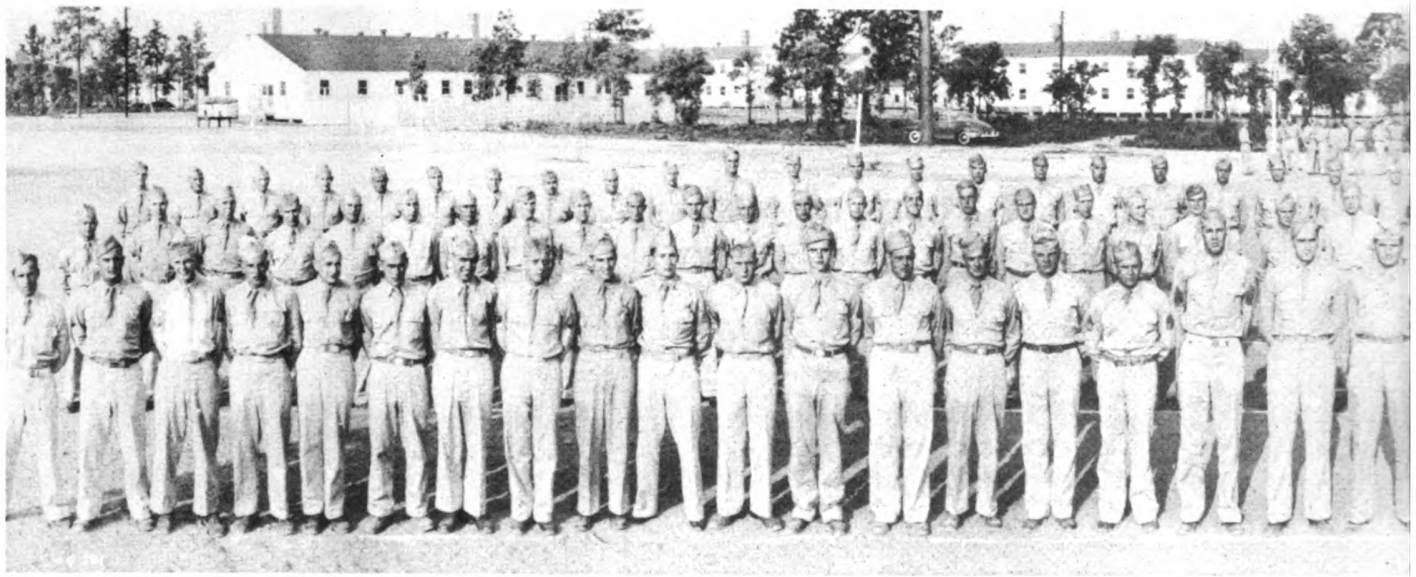


"F" COMPANY

May 1944

**Capt. Timothy C. Brennan
1st Lt. James W. Stuart
1st Lt. George Huggins
2nd Lt. George A. Garbowit
2nd Lt. Merwin P. Magnin
2nd Lt. Charles A. Robertson**

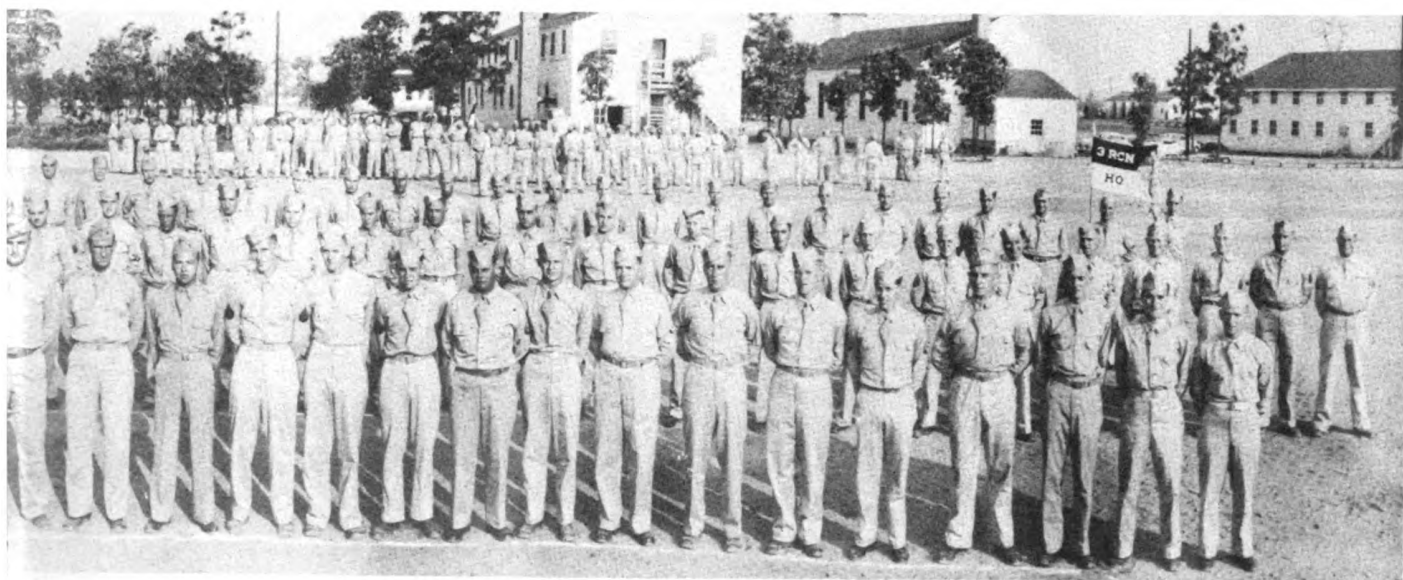


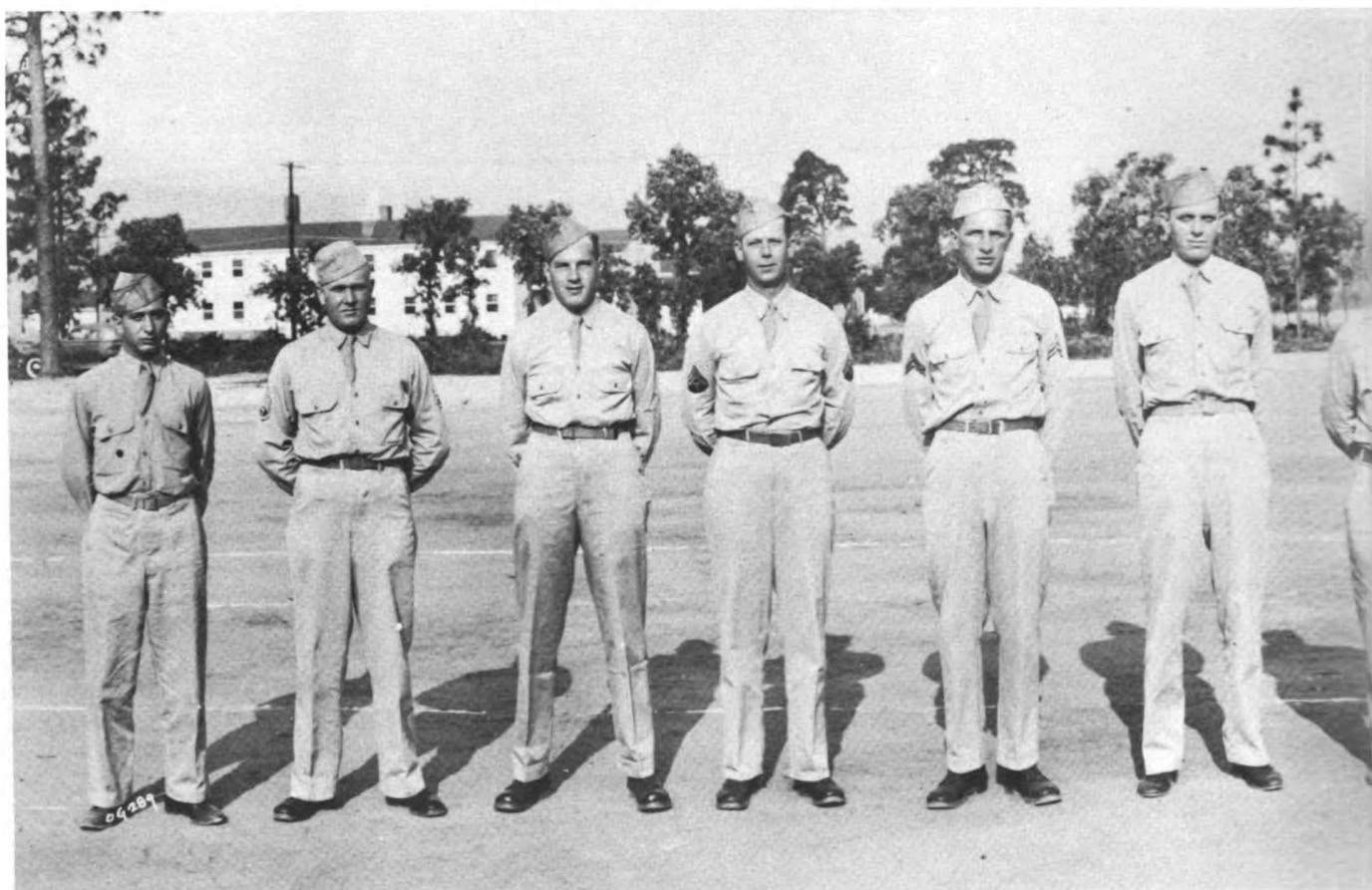


HQ. AND SV. TROOP

May 1944

1st Lt. Millard C. Miller
2nd Lt. Edward Stumbo
2nd Lt. Frederick V. Endres
CWO Marcel A. Robidart
WOJG Gaylord R. Archer

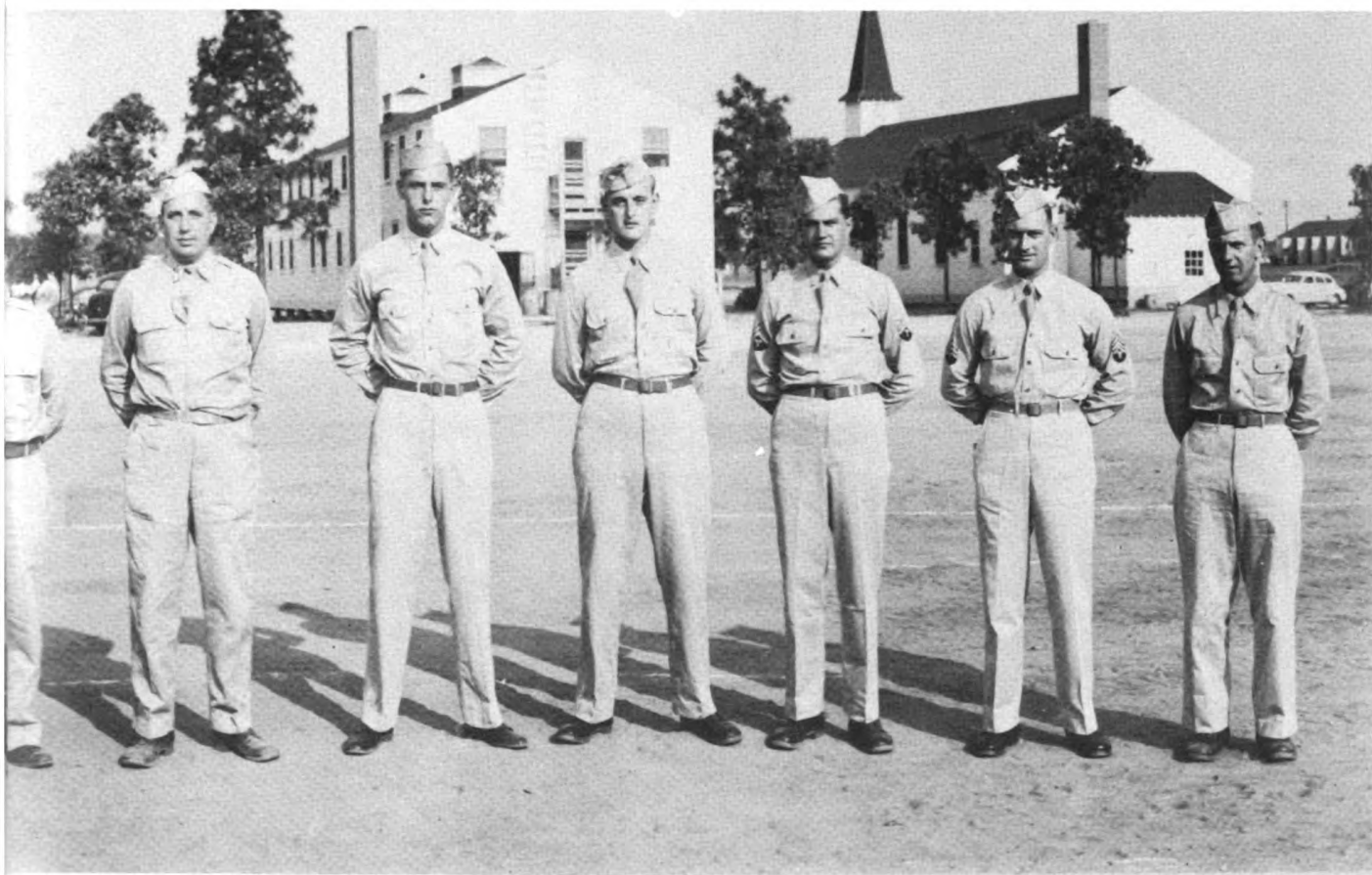


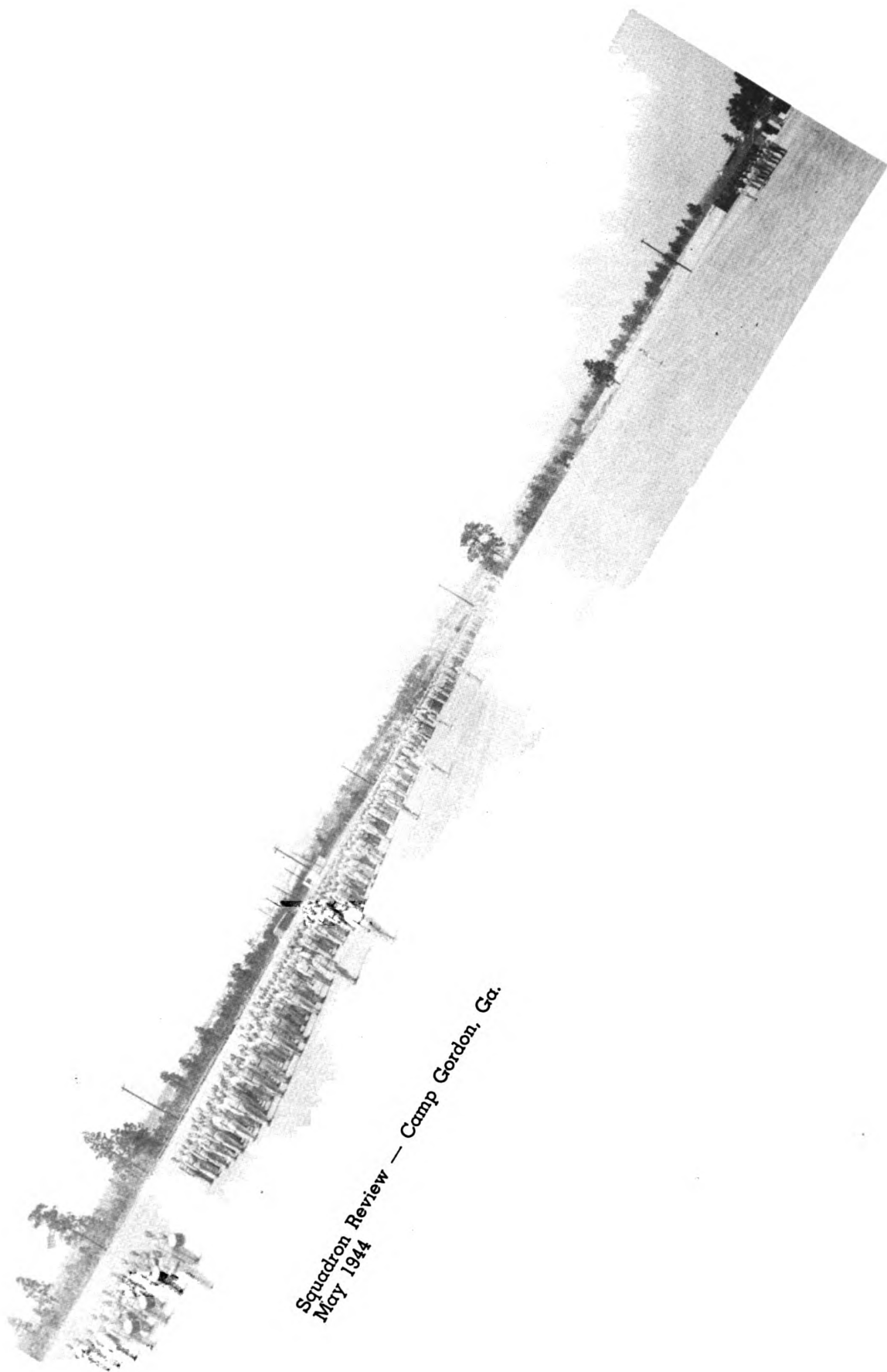


MEDICS

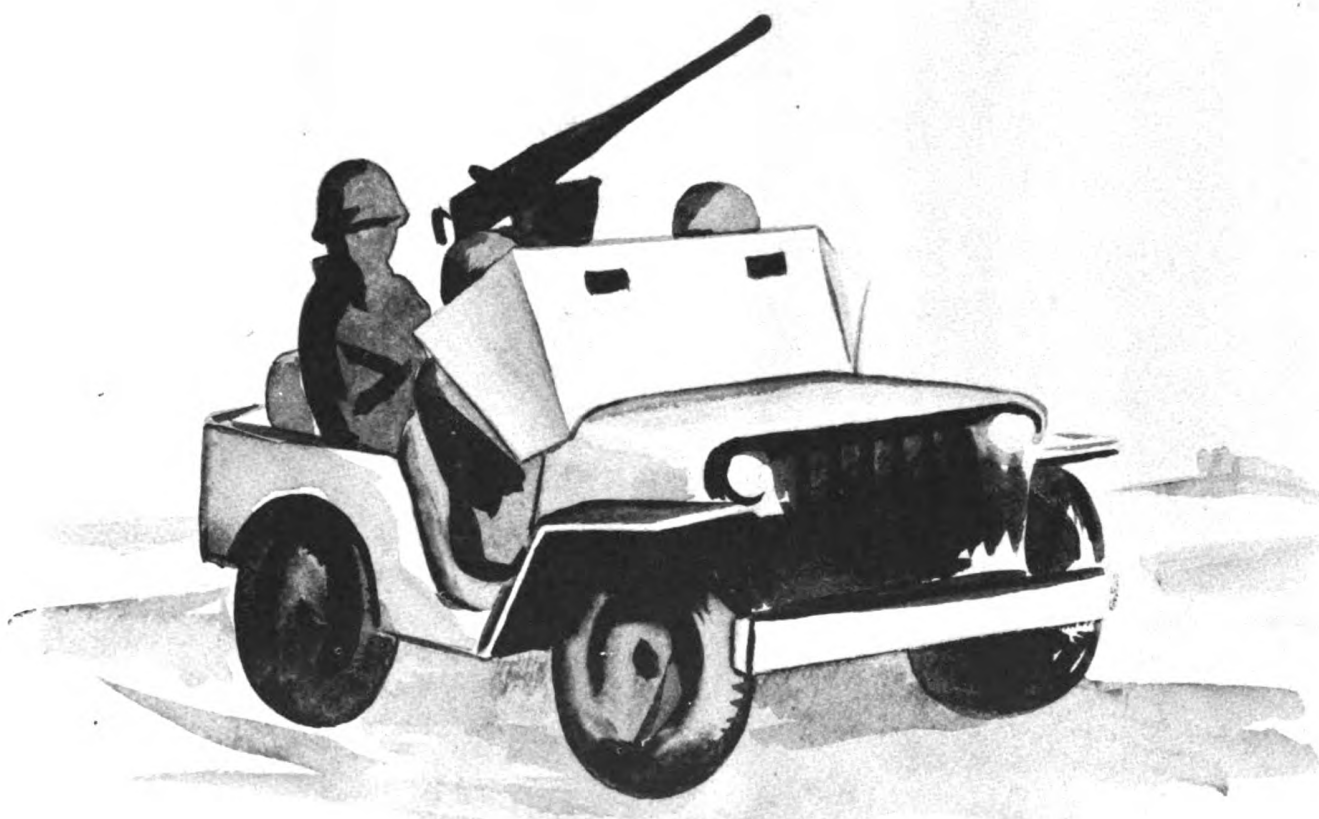
May 1944

Capt. Walter A. Rihl
Capt. Atticio V. Filizola





Squadron Review — Camp Gordon, Ga.
May 1944



9 August 1944—VE Day

NOTE

Detailed information concerning the activities of the 3rd Cavalry Squadron during the months of August and September 1944 was not available. All records covering that period were found to be both inadequate and incomplete for the proper presentation of the facts. We regret that we are able to give you only the briefest of summaries of operations during these months but suggest that you refer to the sections entitled "Special Events" and "Troop Histories" for added details.



Normandy to Moselle

AFTER ACTION REPORT

PART I

6 August — 13 November 1944

The 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mech.), under the command of Lt. Col. Marshall Wallach, left Southampton, England 6 August, 1944. At that time the Squadron was composed of 741 officers and men who were distributed among the various units as indicated below:

	Officers	Enlisted Men
Squadron Headquarters	11	
Headquarters Troop	5	118
A Troop (Reconnaissance)	5	134
B Troop "	5	133
C Troop "	5	135
E Troop (75 mm Assault Guns)	4	80
F Company (Light Tanks)	4	88
Medical Detachment	2	12
Total	41	700

The crossing of the English Channel, made in Liberty Ships and LSTs was uneventful with all units arriving at the Utah beach-head (France) by 2030 the following day.

8 Aug.—Troops B, C, E and F together with the Medical Detachment disembarked and proceeded inland a few miles to Transit Area B there to await the assembly of the remainder of the Squadron. Hq. and A Troops remained aboard the Liberty Ship "Fisher Ames" ready to unload. The man-made harbor which used sunken ships as a breakwater against the open sea, was full of vessels such as ours, all waiting to disgorge their cargoes of men, equipment and supplies. The facilities for unloading—ducks, lighters, rafts and numerous other types of crafts—which could be run directly up on the beach, were not numerous enough to handle the terrific load that had to be poured in over the "hard".

9 Aug.—Headquarter and A Troops disembarked at 0700 and moved out at once to join the Squadron. The morning was spent giving the vehicles a final once over, weapons were cleaned again after the sea trip and final rations of gas, food and ammunition were issued in anticipation of our first mission. The original orders arrived about noon. In a short time the entire Squadron was on its way to an assembly area in the vicinity of Vitre. All units were assembled here by midnight after having traveled some 120 miles.

At this time the newly formed 3rd Army had made a break-through from the Britanny

Peninsula at Avranches, and with Armor and Cavalry driving fast, had just taken the city of Rennes and was even now in the outskirts of Laval as the attack turned east using the Loire River as a bulwark against the enemy on the right flank. On the way to Vitre, the Squadron had passed along the narrow corridor at Avranches where the Germans were in the process of staging a terrific counter-attack to close it off. To stem the tide he had to trap our forces which had already passed through the gap but even more important, it was imperative that he prevent any increase in those forces which already gravely threatened to outflank the entire German position in the west of France.

10 Aug.—Col. Frederick W. Drury, the commanding officer of the 3rd Cavalry Group (composed of the 3rd and 43rd Cavalry Squadrons) received orders from the XX Corps to which the Group had been attached. He was given the mission of establishing contact with the 1st Inf. Div. on the north near Mayenne and with the 5th Inf. Div. on the south at Angers. In addition the two Squadrons were to report on enemy strength and dispositions within this zone as well as to prevent the enemy from making any penetration therein. The 3rd Squadron, with E Troop of the 43rd attached, was immediately ordered to the north to reconnoitre between Mayenne and Evron.

During the day the Squadron moved up to the vicinity of Laval, a distance of 25 miles. This was to be used as the jumping-off place for the original mission.

11 Aug.—First contact was made with the enemy. F Company, working with B Troop, moved out in the early morning. With B Troop in the lead, they advanced as far as Martigne without opposition. However, as they started through the town, the leading vehicles were suddenly fired upon by well concealed machine guns. The intensity of the fire forced the Troop to withdraw slightly but as they attempted to do so other German guns in flank positions also opened up. It was a case of new and untried troops walking into a trap carefully prepared by seasoned veterans. The tankers, quickly grasping the situation, immediately rolled forward to bring the fire of their heavier guns to bear on the German positions. In a comparatively short time the

enemy fire had been neutralized sufficiently to release the trapped men.

From this point until the end of the month, operations of the Squadron can be characterized by the dog-eared expression "rat race". Each platoon, each section and almost every individual had different experiences. We have neither the space nor the information to give detailed accounts of them. All we can do here is to summarize briefly the "big picture" in so far as the Squadron itself was concerned.

On 11 August, the XX Corps ordered us to by-pass all major pockets of enemy resistance. The 3rd Squadron was to push aggressively and move rapidly north and east to the line Carrouges-Sees. By 1500 on the 13th the objective had been reached. All Troops were recovering rapidly from their initial case of jitters as indicated by the fact that a total of 62 prisoners were taken during this period. In addition some 35 had been killed and an unknown number wounded. All units had advanced in their assigned zones, meeting and overcoming pockets of enemy resistance. All indications were that a general withdrawal by the enemy was taking place in the direction of Chartres.

On the 15th of the month, the Squadron was attached to the XII Corps which was joined near the city of Orleans. For the next ten days we operated with the 4th Armored Division. (The climax came with the now historic drive from Sens to Troyes which you will find described in more detail elsewhere in this book.)

The Squadron returned to Group control on the 26th at which time orders were received to push toward Nogent-sur-Seine. For the next few days we acted as flank protection on the right of the XX Corps as it drove for Reims. We had the additional mission of seizing and holding any bridges across the Marne River that had been left intact by the Germans.

Acting on Corps orders, the Squadron continued to advance towards Reims and then turned south and headed due east for Verdun, driving ahead rapidly. We were after a bridge over the Meuse River at Verdun. The zone in which we operated included Belleroy and Verdun and as far south as St. Mihiel. Enemy resistance was encountered and overcome. The enemy made several attempts to encircle our leading elements but these were broken up in fierce fighting. The roads used were, for the most part, blocked and mined. Enemy artillery fire had now become more frequent and more intense. However, by 1500 on the last day of the month our mission was accomplished. We had secured a good bridge over the Meuse just outside Verdun.

September 1944—The first of September found the 3rd Squadron crossing the Meuse and pushing on in its assigned sector for the



F Company enters Sens

next river, the Moselle. Enemy resistance was stiffening, particularly in the area around Conflans, Jarny and Abbeville. One platoon from B Troop under the command of Lt. Jackson, using back roads and fields slipped through the German defenses to reach the large and important city of Thionville. This was a penetration of some 70 miles, deep into the heart of the enemy defenses.** The platoon inflicted heavy casualties on enemy personnel and equipment but, faced by insurmountable odds, was obliged to return to the protection of our lines. In this engagement platoon Sergeant Fred Baker was killed, Lt. Jackson seriously wounded and several others less seriously wounded.

The other reconnaissance platoons were making slower progress in the face of heavy artillery and small arms fire. By nightfall on the 1st, however, most of them had reached positions east of Etain and were located in the general vicinity of the large German air field at Rouvres.

Operations were at a virtual standstill the next day. The supply of gasoline, which for some days previous had been low enough to hamper operations, was now practically exhausted. The entire Squadron was immobilized as a result. Adjacent units including the 7th Armored Division, with which we had been operating, withdrew for lack of gas leaving the Squadron in an extremely vulnerable position in case of a counter-attack by the enemy. It was at this same time that Corps, anticipating that the Germans might in desperation resort to the use of poisonous gas, issued orders to all reconnaissance units to be particularly watchful for indications of

**For details see "Thirty Men to Thionville"

its use. Everyone immediately started to rummage around to locate gas masks, which for the most part had long since been discarded.

A party foraging for gas, finally located a supply at the air field sufficient to allow the 3rd Platoon of B Troop to start out on a mission to Briey, Abbeville and Puxe. A number of enemy strong-points were encountered as well as a substantial number of SS troopers. They also encountered heavy concentrations of artillery and mortar fire yet returned without undue casualties.

4 Sept. — Sufficient gas was finally brought up from rear areas to permit the Squadron to proceed on its mission. Reconnaissance was aggressive with the objective of the Moselle River between Thionville on the north and Pont-a-Mousson to the south. We were to seize and hold all available bridges and allow the 43rd Squadron to pass through as they went on to reconnoitre to the Saar River. Starting out that day, we little realized that months would elapse before we'd see the complete fulfillment of the mission. Elements of both B and C Troops advanced as far as Montauville and Verneville where they were subjected to intense artillery fire and obliged to fall back. Several small patrols were sent out which succeeded in entering the famous town of Gravelotte despite innumerable enemy mines which had been laid not only in the roads but also in the surrounding fields. Later events proved that they had encountered the outer defenses of the fortress of Metz. The various points at which contact was made with the enemy during the day clearly indicated the vastness of the fortifications about the city.

5 Sept.—The Squadron CP moved from Rouvres to the vicinity of Abbeville. All Troops went into positions nearby. Every effort was being made to accomplish our mission. Every available platoon was dispatched to reconnoitre for favorable approaches to the Moselle. We give special mention to only one of these platoons here—one for A Troop under the command of Lt. Eddy. With this unit went Col. Drury, the Group Commander. They were on reconnaissance between Rezonville and Gravelotte. The formation of the platoon was as follows: On the point was Lt. Eddy in his armored car, followed by the armored car of the platoon sergeant; next in line was Col. Drury in a jeep; three more jeeps brought up the rear. At about 1400 the Group was moving east and had reached a draw some 300 yards west of the outskirts of Gravelotte when they were suddenly taken under intense small arms and machine gun fire coming from a patch of woods south of the road. The two armored cars immediately returned the fire as they continued on towards Gravelotte. Col. Drury's bantam, as well as those behind it, was seen to stop and all personnel took cover in a deep ditch on the north side of the road. Lt.

Eddy realizing what had happened circled around to the north and returned to some high ground from which point he would be able to cover the withdrawal of the dismounted men. He was, however, unable to see anyone in the ditch about 1,000 yards to his front.

The Squadron Commander was immediately notified of what had happened. With a platoon of tanks, Col. Wallach rushed to the spot but was prevented from reaching the objective when subjected to heavy artillery and mortar fire. Two of the tanks were damaged and had to be abandoned though the crew escaped unharmed. A party was then organized to search the area for survivors and to regain possession of the four bantams which could still be seen sitting on the road. Under a hail of small arms and machine gun fire Lt. Eddy, Sgts. Rogers and Shyposh, Pvts. Silvia and Zufelt crawled down the hill towards the vehicles. The intensity of the fire was so great that the party was eventually forced to turn back after having lost one man. Although Col. Wallach remained in the immediate vicinity until midnight no further trace of the missing men was found and it was believed that they had all been either killed or captured.

6 Sept.—Early in the morning, XXth Corps attacked east with the intermediate objective of establishing bridgeheads over the Moselle near the cities of Thionville and Metz and with the final objective of securing a bridge over the Rhine River at Mainz. The main attack was to be made by the 7th Armored Division with the 3rd Cavalry Group reconnoitering the main routes of advance ahead of them. Enemy resistance composed of dug-in infantry, road blocks and extensive mine fields forced the abandonment of the attack. Three times during the day platoons of the 3rd Squadron battled their way into Arnaville only to be forced back by heavy concentrations of enemy artillery fire. Meanwhile, other platoons attempting to cross the Moselle at Ancy were driven back after having suffered thirteen casualties.

7 Sept.—The intensity of the resistance which we had encountered obliged Corps to cancel our mission. Both Squadrons were ordered to assemble—the 3rd near Conflans—pending the assignment of a new mission.

At this time C Troop together with one platoon from E Troop was attached to the 5th Infantry Division. The rest of the Squadron moved to the south flank of XX Corps to maintain contact with the XII Corps on a line running west from Pont-A-Mousson. By 2100 the Squadron was in position.

Patrols of the 43rd Squadron which had been operating north near Longuyon reported evidence of a strong enemy counter-attack in the direction of Spincourt. To reinforce the

43rd, E Troop and F. Company were immediately ordered to proceed to this point.

8-14 Sept.—During this period we continued to operate on the Corps' south flank and maintained contact between the 80th and 5th Divisions in the gap between Gorze and Gravelotte. Orders from Corps, issued on the 12th, attached Squadron to the 5th Division with the specific mission of establishing a counter-reconnaissance screen and the maintenance of aggressive patrols to determine enemy strength and dispositions. All units in this area were subjected to frequent artillery and mortar barrages and were opposed by strong enemy forces which though well dug in were apparently content to remain on the defensive. Our mission was accomplished without suffering undue casualties.

On the 14th a field order from XX Corps directed Squadron to revert once again to Group control as soon as we were relieved in our present positions by elements of the 90th Division. Upon relief we were to be prepared to pass through the Moselle bridgehead and pursue vigorous reconnaissance to the east. At the time indications were that the relief would occur momentarily but, as often happened, the situation developed quite to the contrary—the days stretched into weeks and the weeks into more than a month before the actual relief took place.

The rest of the month of September brought little change in our geographical situation. The Squadron remained in position between Gorze and Gravelotte as a screen against enemy penetration. Our line faced Fort Driant to the east and generally overlooked the entire ring of German defenses which surrounded Metz. The enemy clung stubbornly to these defenses. To accomplish our mission, it was necessary to dismount the crews of most of the vehicles. The local terrain which consisted principally of underbrush and other low growths did not permit the passage of armored cars up to the line. Bantams were used for the transportation of ammunition and supplies. Every one dug in for protection against the constant shelling. Machine gun outposts were set up along the trails which wound through the heavily wooded areas. It was more like jungle fighting as the thick foliage often limited observation to five or ten yards. Almost continuous rains turned the entire sector into a quagmire. Fortunately the enemy made no serious attempt to break through our line though skirmishes between advanced patrols were frequent. At the end of the month both sides were in a state of stalemate. There was no indication as to when we would be relieved of this infantry mission and given something commensurate with our capabilities.

October 1944—A new month brought no change in the dispositions of the Squadron or any immediate possibility of one. It was still

expected that the 90th Division would relieve us, but when it would occur no one knew.

1 Oct.—E Troop was ordered to move to the vicinity of Haute Kontz and Garche to reinforce the 43rd Squadron.

2 Oct.—The Squadron was inspected by Lt. Col. Davidson, the Group Executive Officer, who found that despite mud, rain and jungle like conditions that the morale of the Squadron was still high. The defensive line was reorganized into a series of seven strong points supported by well dug-in gun positions. Two platoons from each of the reconnaissance troops and one platoon of F Company were on the line. For the past several days there had been little enemy activity so it was particularly surprising to the F Troopers suddenly to observe a German officer as he nonchalantly strolled out of the woods and fully exposed himself as he scanned the dispositions of our troops through his field glasses. Quickly recovering from their initial surprise, our men dove for their guns and immediately laid down a barrage of fire around him. The enemy officer threw himself to the ground and rapidly crawled to the protection of the woods. A patrol was immediately dispatched in an effort to take him prisoner but his get-away was clean as no further trace of him could be found.

3 Oct.—As a possible aftermath of the previous episode, a three-man German patrol was contacted though it successfully withdrew before we could inflict any casualties. At this time two platoons of F Company were organized as a small task force and placed in position to protect the flank of the 11th Infantry Regiment as it launched an attack against Fort Driant. It was their mission to protect the doughboys from a possible counter-attack.

4 Oct.—Another enemy patrol was encountered. Profiting by previous experience our troops succeeded in taking six prisoners. With this exception the day was quiet though the enemy continued to harass our positions with sporadic mortar and artillery fire.

5-12 Oct.—This period passed quietly with no change in either mission or position. On the 12th, however, the long awaited relief occurred. It was a dirty and happy Squadron that yielded its positions to the 358th Infantry. By 2100 the Squadron was assembled in the Hayange-Clouange-Moyeuve area with orders for a three-day rest period. Our only tactical mission was to maintain one reconnaissance troop and one tank platoon on a 30-minute alert as a mobile reserve for Task Force Polk (3rd Cavalry Group reinforced by the 807th T.D. Bn., the 135th Engineer Bn. and one regiment of French soldiers) which at that time was momentarily expecting a counter-attack by the Germans from across the Moselle.

15 Oct.—It was now back into the line

for the 3rd. We relieved elements of the 43rd Squadron and the 135th Engineers. By 2200 the relief had been completed with the Squadron disposed as follows: A Troop had two platoons in Richmont and one in reserve at Boussange—the Troop mission was to maintain contact with the 90th Rcn. Troop on the south with the latter unit agreeing to push contact patrols to the outskirts of Richemont as a blown bridge over the Orne River prevented us from going further south; F Company was in Uckange; C Troop had elements in Ebange, Daspich and Beauregard; E Troop went to Ersange and B into Squadron reserve at Fameck. The Squadron CP was established in Hayange.

At this time persistent civilian reports indicated that the Germans were infiltrating in small groups through the lines and were operating in our rear areas. It was rumored that when they had organized and concentrated a sufficient number of troops behind us a coordinated attack from front and rear would be launched. However, with the exception of one patrol, these rumors ultimately proved to be false. Nevertheless, precautionary measures were taken and daily patrols were dispatched to the Bois de St. Hubert, the most likely assembly area for the German forces.

16-17 Oct.—The situation remained relatively quiet. The only change in our disposition concerned E Troop which moved from Ersange and took up positions in the Bois de St. Hubert where all guns were dug in and fields of fire cleared. The guns were now more centrally located in respect to the Squadron front. In addition, the Troop was ordered to keep one radio in on the Artillery liaison plane's frequency so that the guns could be coordinated with air observation.

18-19 Oct.—Activity, both friendly and enemy, was confined to harassing artillery shelling. The enemy dropped five shells of unknown caliber in the close proximity of the Squadron CP at Hayange though no damage was reported. During the day of the 19th, the enemy intensified his shelling. A substantial number of 120 mm shells landed in the Squadron zone.

So far little aggressive patrolling had been done but on the 19th orders were received to send out several strong combat patrols each night with the mission of destroying any enemy encountered and of obtaining prisoners and identifications. If possible, some of these patrols were to cross the Moselle. At the same time, the front line troops were to harass the enemy with the fire of their 50 cal. machine guns, 37s and mortars. On the night of the 19th, one of the first patrols, working its way along the river bank between Daspich and Thionville encountered a three-man enemy patrol. In the fire fight that followed, two of the Germans were killed. The third man made good his escape. This

same night, another patrol crossed the river in the vicinity of Bertrange. After crossing the river, however, they found that further progress was blocked by an extensive mine field as well as barbed wire entanglements and numerous booby traps. The patrol was obliged to return.

20 Oct.—B Troop relieved A Troop which reverted to Squadron reserve.

21 Oct.—Combat patrols were again sent out during the night, one of which was scheduled to operate to the east of the river. As this patrol was attempting to locate a suitable crossing site, they observed two Germans walking along the bank of the canal just south of Thionville. Our patrol threw two grenades. The Germans disappeared. This activity had served to alert other Germans on the east side of the river and they immediately lit up the area with flares thereby preventing our patrol from carrying out its mission.

22 Oct.—At night, three separate patrols worked along the west bank of the river while three others were to make a crossing. The group from F Company, under Lt. Garbowit, crossed just north of Uckange with the mission of checking what was believed to be a mine field near this point. They found that the mines were only dummies made out of mud and returned without making contact with the enemy. Meanwhile, B Troop trying to get across north of Richemont was driven back by small arms fire from a group of some twenty Germans. The patrol from C Troop with Lt. Boren in command made a successful crossing about half way between Ebange and Uckange. After landing they proceeded east and reconnoitered the area between Illange and Bertrange. They found several dug-in gun emplacements and observed the firing of a 150 mm gun and one 75 mm gun. Lt. Boren concluded that this was an enemy strong point which was occupied during the day from which point the Germans moved up close to the river during the hours of darkness. Though the patrol made no direct contact with the enemy, numerous Germans were heard as they appeared to be very confident of themselves and were very careless about drawing attention to themselves. The C Troopers eventually recrossed the river. As they were moving along the west bank of the river on their way back to the CP, they passed three German soldiers who were seated in a rubber boat just off shore. The Germans, believing our patrol to be a friendly one, left the boat and attempted to join our group. They were immediately called upon to surrender. Their answer was a burst of machine-pistol fire. The men from C Troop opened up their tommy-guns at a range of about eight feet. They couldn't miss and didn't. The sound of the firing, however, aroused other Germans on the east side of the river who immediately opened up with machine guns and prevented

our patrol from getting to the bodies of the two Germans who had been killed. Early the next morning another patrol was dispatched to the spot but found that the bodies had already been removed. While this had been going on, the Squadron area was subjected to a particularly heavy barrage of what was estimated to be 150 mm shelling as well as mortar and small arms fire.

C Troop in Ebange, Daspich and Beauregard was relieved by A Troop.

23 Oct.—This was a quiet day. All patrolling was confined to the west bank of the river and all reported back with negative information.

24 Oct.—Two patrols were given missions of crossing. One was driven back by intense machine gun fire but the other, consisting of four men and Lt. Garbowit from F Company, made a successful trip. Their objective was a barn which we had reason to believe was being used by the Germans as an outpost. It had been reconnoitered by fire the previous night and fire had been returned from it. To cover the patrol while they crossed and while they were operating on the east bank, three 30 cal. machine guns and one 50 were placed in covered positions along the west bank of the river. One gun fired at irregular intervals to create a diversion. The patrol landed some 200 yards north of the objective. They first had to cut their way through extensive barbed wire entanglements before they attacked the barn with fragmentation grenades and tommy-guns. Their flank was covered by supporting fire from our machine guns. A portion of the barn was destroyed but upon entering the place it was found to be deserted. The members of the patrol shouted and sang songs in an effort to attract attention but as there was still no evidence of the enemy, they finally returned without further incident. It was concluded that this section of the river line was only lightly held by the enemy and that he probably occupied different positions each night.

25 Oct.—C Troop relieved B.

Another patrol from F Company operating along the west edge of the river at night heard voices across the canal which they believed to be a two-man listening post. The patrol leader thought that the Germans had observed our activity on the preceding night since the sounds made by our men as they moved on drew fire from several machine guns and five or six machine pistols. It appeared that the enemy had set a trap for any of our patrols that might attempt to navigate the river in this vicinity.

26 Oct.—Six patrols were sent out under cover of darkness at various points along the river. The one which was operating in the vicinity of Ebange received continuous and heavy machine gun fire from an enemy patrol along the canal but when we opened fire,

the enemy group withdrew. The other patrols returned with negative reports.

27-29 Oct.—Patrolling was again limited to the west side of the river. No contact with the enemy was reported although their artillery was fairly active with a large number of shells landing near Uckange. It was at this time that the Germans destroyed the bridges over the canal at Thionville.

30 Oct.—At 0425, while it was still dark, a six-man patrol from B Troop, led by Lt. Courtright, crossed the river near Thionville to reconnoitre the east bank and secure identifications. They carried with them two SCR-536 radios. When they reached the east bank, four men fanned out as security while the leader and another man reconnoitered the area. The two of them investigated a bath house, a blockhouse and a lot of deep trenches in the railroad yards but found no evidence of recent occupation. Lt. Courtright returned to the main body of the patrol and instructed them to hide in a boathouse where they deflated the rubber boat in which they had crossed. The party remained here until daylight when they moved out quietly to investigate what was believed to be an enemy command-post in a nearby house. They succeeded in reaching the house without drawing attention and found a stairway on the outside which ran up to the roof. They all climbed the stairs with the intention of reconnoitering the house from the top down. Inside the house they found six Germans. Although the enemy was taken pretty much by surprise, they succeeded in withdrawing to a tunnel which led to a nearby fort. Our patrol wounded one of the Germans but he was carried into the tunnel before we could get to him. Behind them they slammed and bolted a heavy iron door. The patrol, thwarted in its attempt to follow them, busied itself in a thorough search of the house for valuable information on identifications and dispositions. Nothing of value was found, however, so they destroyed the building with a couple of incendiary grenades. The patrol then returned to the boathouse where they remained in hiding the rest of the day. During the day several enemy patrols of from three to twenty men were observed searching the other buildings near the railroad yards. These same German patrols were picked up by friendly artillery observers who coordinated the fire of their guns so effectively that all but two of the Germans were killed as directly observed by our patrol. Towards dusk some 30 enemy were seen starting to close in on the boathouse. Lt. Courtright ordered four of the men to recross the river immediately—it was obviously too large a force for our small group to contend with. It was now found that the rubber boat in which the initial crossing had been made and which had been deflated earlier in the day, could not be blown up again as the air pump would

not work. A hasty reconnaissance of the boat-house unearthed a heavy metal boat which would accommodate four men. With considerable difficulty it was eventually launched. Just as they shoved out from shore they were spotted by the enemy who lit up the entire area with flares but who, for some unknown reason, failed to fire upon the boat. Two of the men in the boat had been instructed to return to the boathouse as soon as possible to pick up the two remaining members of the party who were meanwhile crouching low in the frigid water in anticipation of their prompt return. One German walked within a couple of feet of their position but failed to see them. As the boat started on its return trip, it was suddenly engulfed in a barrage of small arms fire which forced them back to shore. Lt. Lt. Courtright and his companion could not remain where they were without grave danger of being discovered by the enemy so, throwing caution aside, they fired their rifles at the Germans who happened to be nearby and as a parting gesture, threw their last remaining grenades and dove into the frigid stream. The Germans promptly replied with all available small arms which were directed at the swimming targets. To avoid this hail of fire, the swimmers were forced to go under water most of the way back but eventually reached the protection of the friendly shore safe and uninjured.

During the last part of the month the Squadron was faced with a second problem—in addition to contending with the enemy, the civilians were definitely becoming a military menace. We were located in a thickly populated and highly industrialized region of France. It was estimated that the civilians were about 75% pro-German. Incidents of wire cutting, sniping, flashing signal lights and reports of civilians informing the enemy of our strength and dispositions were numerous. As a result CIC detachments had to be established in Hayange and other neighboring towns to handle these problems. The troops in the front line towns enforced strict regulations as to civilian movement. In addition a curfew was established and all military installations were closely guarded against civilian observation. All houses were thoroughly searched for weapons. By the end of the month the situation was well in hand.

November 1944—The mission of Task Force Polk remained unchanged. The Task Force was composed of, in addition to the two Squadrons, the 135th Eng. Bn. (C), and the 807th TD Bn. In direct support were two battalions of artillery, the 689th (155 Howitzers) and the 241st (105 Howitzers). The TF zone went as far north as Fixem and south along the river to Richmond and the Orne River. The mission was still one of protecting the north flank of XX Corps and preventing the enemy from making a crossing of the Moselle.

The 3rd Squadron continued in positions between Thionville and Richmond.

1-2 Nov.—These were quiet days with no contact with the enemy reported. E Troop, despite poor visibility, continued to harass the German positions on the east side of the river. Late in the afternoon of the 2nd some changes were made in the Squadron zone—the southern boundary would be the town of Uckange. We were also ordered to relieve the 135th Engineers in Thionville. When the juggling of the troops had been completed, A Troop was in Thionville, C between Daspich and Beauregard and B was in Ebange. The positions of E and F were unchanged.

3-4 Nov.—The 43rd Squadron made an all out attack on the town of Berg. To relieve them B Troop was dispatched to Garche and Koeckling. Berg was the last remaining foothold of the Germans on the west side of the Moselle within the zone occupied by Task Force Polk and it was imperative that they be driven from this point before any concerted drive could be made against the enemy east of the river. The tempo of the night patrols was increased as an effective counter-reconnaissance screen was needed to prevent hostile observation of 3rd Army preparations for a major attack which was scheduled for a date later on in the month. The enemy appeared content, however, to throw only a few rounds of harassing fire in our general direction.

5-8 Nov.—The next few days were comparatively quiet though on the night of the 6th, a patrol from B Troop led by Sgt. Wright encountered a group of five Germans on the west side of the river near Ebange. The Germans had apparently intended to ambush one of our regular patrols as they were in position behind some bushes near the edge of the road and were armed with rifle grenades and automatic weapons. The group with Sgt. Wright approached the ambush from the rear, taking them by surprise. In the fire fight that followed, one member of our patrol was wounded while we accounted for two of the Germans. Sgt. Wright got his hands on one German in an effort to throw him to the ground and take him prisoner but in doing so he slipped and fell while the German took advantage of the break to make a hasty getaway. By the time he could get our patrol reorganized, there was no sign of the enemy except for their weapons which had been left behind so precipitous was their retreat.

9 Nov.—This was D day for the 3rd Army. It was a full scale attack across the Moselle. In our sector the attack was to be made by the 90th and 95th Infantry Divisions. The attack came as a complete surprise to the Germans and was a tribute to the effectiveness with which we had carried out our mission of keeping the Germans out of the zone. The fact that it was a complete surprise was borne out by

statements of numerous prisoners as well as by an official document which was captured during the attack.

As part of the artillery barrage preliminary to the attack, E Troop shelled enemy installations across the river.

The mission of Task Force Polk was changed on this day. The 3rd Squadron was relieved by the 135th Engineers and moved north to occupy positions along the river between Basse-Kontz and Stadtbredimus and by 2100 had completed relief of elements of the 83rd Division in this area. The Squadron was disposed with C Troop on the forward slopes of the hills at Basse-Kontz and Schengen, B Troop went to Winterange and Remerschen, A Troop occupied Remich and Schwersingen, E Troop in Gandren and F Company was in Burferange as Squadron reserve near the CP

at Mondorf.

10-11 Nov.—Activity consisted primarily of harassing fires by E Troop and our supporting TDs. The reconnaissance troops made thorough investigations of their respective areas and cleared out road blocks, mines and booby traps. Enemy activity was negligible.

The new mission was of short duration. T. F. POLK, which for the past few days, had been attached to the 83rd Division was reassigned to the XX Corps as of 2100 this day. By noon of the 12th all troops had been relieved by the 330th Infantry Regiment.

12 Nov.—The entire Squadron moved to a temporary assembly area in the vicinity of Hayange. This was the first time since going into action in August that the entire unit had been in reserve. The reserve status lasted exactly twenty-four hours.



Floating Bailey Bridge at Thionville

PART II

On the 14th of November the 3rd Squadron was ordered to cross the Moselle River and relieve elements of the 1st Bn. 359th Inf. as well as any elements of the 10th Armored Division which we found north of the road which ran through Kerling and Remeling. To the Squadron was attached one company of the 135th Engineers and one company of Tank Destroyers. We were to establish a blocking line to protect the north flank of XX Corps. We were also to clear the town of Rettel and to be prepared to reconnoitre in strength north-east towards Saarburg. Artillery support would be furnished by the 241st F.A. Bn. from positions on the west side of the river.

The Squadron moved out at 1130 the morning of the 14th from Hayange and closed in a temporary assembly area at the Catenoum barracks at 1500. After a brief rest period movement across the river began. By 2100 Troops A, B and C had completed the crossing over the Catenoum bridge. E Troop and F Company with the attached company of TDs crossed at Malling. The reconnaissance troops immediately started to relieve the Infantry while the remainder of the Squadron assembled at Hunting for the night.

15 Nov.—At 0900 two platoons from A Troop started out to reconnoitre to Rettel. They found that the town was not occupied and so pushed on to the high ground to the south and east where they were suddenly subjected to heavy enemy artillery fire.

16 Nov.—Using one platoon from A Troop, one platoon of light tanks and a platoon of TDs, the Squadron pushed out aggressively for Sierck. It was soon discovered that Sierck had also been abandoned by the Germans. Utilizing A, B and F plus TDs and Engineers we continued on to Rustroff, Kirsch, Montenach and Evendorff. Enemy opposition was negligible.

17 Nov.—Orders were issued to reconnoitre north and east in the zone bounded on the left by the Moselle and on the right by a line generally running from Kiersch through Buschdorf, Kirf, Kahren and Saarburg. The right flank was to be covered by the 43rd Squadron. Embarking on this new mission the morning of the 17th, stiff enemy resistance was encountered as the Squadron attempted to gain control of the high ground to the north. One platoon of C Troop under Lt. Boren pushed on into Apach and thence across the German border at 0927. This was the first unit of the 3rd Army to enter Germany. The platoon continued to advance as far as Maimule where heavy small arms and artillery fire forced them to withdraw temporarily. It was during this engagement that Lt. Boren was seriously wounded. As soon as tanks could be brought up however the attack was resumed and Maimule retaken. Meanwhile A

Troop, reinforced, had met and overcome determined resistance in the vicinity of Manderen where 13 enemy were killed. The town was eventually bypassed and the Troop fought its way into Merschweiller. During the entire day progress was hampered by enemy road blocks, tank traps, blown roads and bridges but by nightfall the Squadron occupied the towns of Maimuhle, Apach, Kirsch and Merschweiller. A recount of the day's operations revealed a total of 53 prisoners in addition to 15 known killed. Our troops suffered only two casualties.

18 Nov.—The attack was resumed with each Rcn. Troop reinforced with tanks and TDs. A Troop, operating on the right in the Squadron zone, attacked northeast from Merschweiller towards Eft. The attack had scarcely started when stiff opposition was encountered, but by dint of superior fire power, well coordinated artillery support and rapid maneuvering, the enemy was driven from their positions on the high ground. After a four-hour battle 43 prisoners were taken and an unknown number killed. We suffered three casualties and lost one armored car and one tank. From their newly won positions A Troop observed a strong column of enemy infantry moving into Eft. The TDs and artillery were immediately given a fire mission with the former obtaining two direct hits forcing the column to disperse. A Troop then moved into Eft without opposition. In the meantime, B Troop was attacking north from Kirsch passing successively through Apach, Belmach, Perl, Ober-Perl and finally to Wochern. With the exception of scattered enemy artillery fire, they met little resistance. During this time C Troop was driving north out of Maimule and F Company was busy rounding up 15 prisoners as they cleared the town of Sehnendorf. C Troop next forced its way into Besch where all resistance was eliminated by nightfall. All forward elements of the Squadron were well established inside Germany by the end of the day.

Interrogation of the 140 prisoners taken on the 18th revealed the extent of the German fortifications to the north in our zone. The prisoners also said that their morale was generally low and that many of their companies were thoroughly demoralized as a result of our attacks. They also revealed that the 416th Inf. Div. to which they belonged had its headquarters in Oberleuken. This information was immediately relayed to Corps Headquarters. Shortly thereafter Oberleuken was given a thorough going-over by a squadron of P-47s.

19 Nov.—This was our first contact with the Siegfried Line. Early in the morning B Troop pushed out from Wochern in the direction of Tettingen where they ran into three pill-boxes and a long row of dragon's teeth which were defended by numerous anti-tank guns. After a sharp battle the Troop was



The Doughnut Wagon

obliged to pull back into Wochern. C Troop advancing from Besch encountered another section of the same line which ran some 500 yards north of the town. While making a dismounted reconnaissance of the line they captured several prisoners but found that it was impossible to by-pass these defenses so they moved on to Nennig under cover of our supporting artillery. Nennig also turned out to be strongly held by the enemy and C Troop was obliged to withdraw. In the meantime A Troop had been busy working its way north from Eft through Hellendorf and on to Borg. The latter town was defended but after a sharp fire fight the enemy was driven out and our forces occupied the village.

With the Squadron occupying a line generally through Besch-Wochern-Borg and Hellendorf, orders were received to hold up our attack. Instead we were instructed to reconnoitre the fortifications encountered during the morning and to clean up isolated pockets of enemy who had been by-passed. A recapitulation of the day's activities revealed another 58 prisoners captured as well as numerous killed and wounded. We had suffered no casualties.

As a result of the information secured in regard to enemy strength, dispositions and fortifications, our original mission of advancing to Saarburg was canceled. Instead we were to hold our established line until passed through by the 10th Armored Division.

21 Nov.—Our relief was completed with the Squadron subsequently assembling in the area Perl, Ober-Perl, and Besch where we remained for several days utilizing the period for much needed rehabilitation and maintenance.

26 Nov.—Late in the afternoon the 3rd Cavalry Group received orders to relieve the 10th Armored Division in the zone between the Moselle and the Saar River in virtually the

same positions we had previously occupied. The Armored Division had failed to make an appreciable dent in the German positions. The mission called for us to maintain contact with the enemy and to protect the north flank of the XX Corps. To assist the Group, attachments of the 5th Field Artillery Group and 135th Engineer Bn. were made.

Under the new orders the 3rd Squadron was assigned the zone bounded on the left by the Moselle and on the right by a line through Eft, Hellendorf and Oberleuken. In addition we were instructed to institute vigorous reconnaissance to determine enemy defenses in the zone and to locate weak points in the German defenses which could be used as gateways for our future attack.

28 Nov.—By 2100, 28 November the Squadron had completed relief of the 10th Armored Division in its assigned zone. C Troop (-), plus one platoon of Tank Destroyers was in Besch; F Company (-) and E Troop (-) with one section of TDs were in Wochern; one platoon of B Troop and one from C were disposed along the left side of the road between Wochern and Tettingen as well as another platoon of B Troop along the road just south-east of Tettingen; one platoon of F Company, one platoon of TDs and Troop A (-) were in



Cavalry and Infantry at Apach

Borg and one platoon A Troop was in the edge of the Campholz Woods. Three sections of A Troop occupied three pillboxes between Oberleuken and the Campholz Woods. Artillery support was furnished by one medium and one light battalion of the 83rd Infantry Division located on the West side of the river.

At this time we discovered that the German 416th Division, which had previously opposed us in this sector, had been reinforced by the 21st Panzer Division which had been thrown in to oppose our armored division. The Germans had bitterly defended this switch line between Tettingen and Oberleuken, employing frequent counter-attacks and a great deal of artillery.

During the night the Germans poured some 250 rounds of artillery on A Troop positions in the Campholz Woods and another 200 into Borg. The platoon of A Troop which was occupying the pillboxes engaged the enemy with hand grenades and small arms when attacked by a twelve-man patrol. As this patrol continued to advance on the pillboxes, our troops called for artillery fire directly on their positions which, combined with our accurate small arms fire, forced the patrol to withdraw leaving several dead behind.

29 Nov.—Aggressive reconnaissance was started. Patrols were sent into the woods to the east of Borg as well as into the woods to the north-west of the town. About 1700 forward positions of A Troop were subjected to enemy small arms fire. A group of Germans estimated as a company, was observed moving up on each flank. An intense fire fight followed while our artillery shelled the advancing Germans. F Company was immediately moved from Wochern to Borg. The Germans were successful in penetrating the dragon's teeth but were forced to withdraw when we counter-attacked with a platoon of tanks together with one dismounted platoon. In this engagement we suffered casualties of one killed and one wounded. Enemy casualties were heavy although the exact number could not be determined. Two prisoners were taken from the 125th Panzer Grenadier Regiment.

30 Nov.—On the last day of the month patrolling was concentrated in the woods north-west of Borg and along the road from Borg towards Oberleuken. The day was uneventful except for a three-man patrol which was driven away from Tettingen by B Troop.

December—As the month of December opened the Troops were located in Besch, Wochern, Tettingen and Borg with the Squadron CP at Pillingen. The entire Group was confronted by extensive fortifications consisting of dragon's teeth, anti-tank ditches, pillboxes and numerous mine fields. In addition to maintaining strong defensive positions to prevent any enemy penetration, we were also conducting extensive patrolling to uncover the enemy defensive system preparatory to an attack. We were opposed by remnants of the 416th Infantry Division augmented by Troops of several Festung (Fortress) Battalions.

1-4 Dec.—We concentrated our efforts on dismounted reconnaissance, in the area north of Besch towards Nennig, in the woods north

and west of Borg and the Borg-Oberleuken and Borg-Hellendorf roads. These roads were reconnoitered with a view to moving tanks and assault guns over them. E Troop working on the Borg-Oberleuken road found it blocked by a huge crater some 40 feet long, 35 feet wide and 12 feet deep. The woods in the vicinity of Borg were clear. C Troop patrols operating out of Besch found dragon's-teeth, anti-tank ditches and mine fields defended by an alert enemy.

As Group was particularly anxious to learn if the Germans had strengthened their forces in the positions opposing us orders were issued to concentrate on the capture of prisoners. For this purpose strong combat patrols were sent out by C and B Troops. C Troop succeeded in forcing three Germans out of their foxholes south of Nennig and immediately took them prisoner. They were of little value however as they proved to be from units already identified. Meanwhile the enemy was also active, sending out numerous patrols. One of their patrols attempted to approach Tettingen on the 2nd, but was driven away by B Troop who used hand grenades and small arms. Another patrol approached a B Troop outpost the night of the 4th. The outpost withheld fire hoping to take them prisoners but the Germans halted some 75 yards away. At this time our platoon leader called for artillery fire to their rear hoping by this means to drive them into our positions. The plan was unsuccessful, however, as the enemy patrol pulled off to the flank as the shells started to fall. At this time our front lines were subjected to a considerable amount of machine gun, rifle and mortar fire indicating an alert and aggressive enemy, albeit defensive. The enemy was employing 88 mm, 75 mm, heavy artillery and mortars to harass our lines. Fortunately our casualties were extremely light though enemy fire was of greater intensity than any we had been subjected to up to this time.

The TDs supporting us (the 614th TD Bn. —Colored) scored three direct hits on enemy-held pillboxes north of Borg. As a result a white flag was raised but when an A Troop patrol went out to take them prisoners, the Germans shut themselves inside and opened fire on our patrol. The TDs then reopened fire and forced the enemy to flee in haste.

5 Dec.—The 3rd Cavalry Group received orders to be prepared to assume control of the remainder of the 10th Armored zone in addition to the front already assigned. The relief would be started without delay. Our mission of protecting the north flank of the XX Corps and of maintaining contact with the enemy remained unchanged. The addition of this new front gave the Group a front of 17.5 miles or about one-third of the entire Corps' front.

The 3rd Squadron was ordered to relieve



Catenoum Bridge

the 43rd Squadron in their sector with the latter in turn to relieve the 10th Armored Division. At the same time Squadron was instructed to maintain its position in Tettingen but to withdraw from pillboxes north of Borg since too many troops were required to hold them. To deny their use to the Germans the attached Engineers were ordered to destroy these pillboxes. Since it was likely that any enemy offensive would develop in the 3rd Squadron zone, most of the TDs were attached to it. In addition the 3rd Cavalry Group had the direct support of both the 5th Field Artillery Group and the 10th Armored Division Artillery.

By 1740 we had completed the relief of the 43rd Squadron. Elements of the Squadron were now located in Besch, Tettingen, Wochern, Hellendorf, Borg, Buschdorf, Mittel and at the edge of the Forest of Saarburg. The relief caused no unusual reaction on the part of the enemy nor did the blowing of the pillboxes by the Engineers.

7 Dec.—The Squadron was patrolling the main part of the Forest of Saarburg with patrols from three Troops cooperating to make a thorough coverage. On this particular day there was no enemy contact in the Forest, though C Troop in Borg wounded and captured two prisoners who approached their outposts. Interrogation of the prisoners revealed that a substantial number of Germans opposing us wanted to surrender but that they had been told that mines had been placed in front of their own positions as a means of preventing any large scale surrender.

9 Dec.—For the next two days, no incident of particular interest occurred though we were subjected to sporadic artillery and mortar fire. At 0400 the morning of 9 December, however, Lt. Courtwright and a Sergeant and two Frenchmen from B Troop left Tettingen on a deep patrolling mission to determine enemy strength and defensive positions on their front. The patrol moved north and by dawn had reached a position in the woods just west of Sinz on the Sinz-Remick Highway two miles

behind the German line. During the day they investigated the woods and observed movement along the highway. They also observed several pillboxes, OPs, machine gun nests and communication lines all of which were carefully charted for future reference. During the day they killed one German and took three prisoners. While hiding in the woods, they were discovered by two other Germans who had been checking a telephone line. One of them attempted to get away and was killed while the other was made prisoner. Later, while investigating a machine gun position, two more were captured. A total of 16 Germans were observed and they estimated that at least a battalion occupied the line from Oberleuken to the river. At 1800 our patrol returned to Tettingen escorting its bag of PWs.

10 Dec.—The enemy sent another patrol towards Tettingen but it was driven off after a brief fire fight. During the day a Bantam proceeding from Borg to Teningen was fired on by a machine gun located in a house near



First Sq. CP in Germany (Perl)

Butzdorf. The TDs took the house under direct fire and destroyed part of it. Investigation revealed three Germans in the basement who were immediately killed with hand grenades.

Up to this time the weather in December had been very rainy; the roads and ground were thick with mud though sudden cold spells had turned the rain to sleet and snow. Under these conditions observation of artillery fire had been negligible. However, the 12 December brought clearing weather and increased artillery fire on the part of the Germans as well as ourselves. On this date C Troop and B changed positions. B in Tettingen had been subjected to daily shelling and had borne the brunt of the enemy fire. One TD in town had been destroyed by direct fire though with no loss of personnel.

13-16 Dec.—This period was characterized by regular patrol activity which for the most part reported no enemy contact. Our artillery and assault guns continued to ha-



Snow suits for patrols

pass the enemy day and night,—German fire was comparatively light and we suffered no casualties. One incident of interest occurred involving the apparent abuse of the Red Cross flag by the Germans. On the morning of the 16th 10 enemy were observed carrying two Red Cross flags and two stretchers which appeared to be loaded. They were going from a pillbox into a bunker. A short time later nine more were seen with three stretchers and more flags moving from the bunker back to the pillbox; then 19 more appeared and more Red Cross emblems with loaded stretchers going to the bunker again. As they moved up the slope others joined the procession until there were about fifty Germans in full view. They all disappeared into the bunker. Our troops withheld fire but were convinced that they were in the act of supplying the pillbox and were not carrying wounded.

The "Battle of the Bulge" started on the 16th and was accompanied on our own front by increased enemy activity. Prompt steps were taken to strengthen our defensive positions. Several incidents which occurred at this time strengthened our belief in the possibility of a thrust into our zone as well.

17 Dec.—Under cover of the early morning darkness enemy aircraft suddenly became active and dropped numerous flares and a few bombs. At dawn there was a systematic shelling of virtually all the front line towns. In intensity the fire was in marked contrast to the activity of previous days. Statements from PWs gave further indications of an attack. For two successive days B Troop had contacted small enemy patrols in the Camp-holz Woods. On the 17th a seven-man patrol was sent to ambush any enemy patrol. After hiding in foxholes for some 20 minutes, four Germans were observed approaching from the north-west. One turned and fled when he observed our men in the foxholes. The other three surrendered when our patrol opened fire. These PWs furnished information regarding a proposed attack by a Battalion of Infantry supported by Tanks against our positions in Borg

and Tettingen—they knew that there was no infantry support in our sector. They were to get artillery support from guns concentrated in Sinz. Later on in the day 17 Germans, three of them with field glasses, were observed watching our positions.—A 15-man enemy patrol, the largest contacted in some time, was engaged in a fire fight by A Troop in the Saarburg Forest and forced to withdraw. At this time reports were also received from higher headquarters that, there were two enemy divisions in the vicinity of Trier which had not been committed and that there had recently been a general increase in activity between Trier and Saarburg. In addition a Pontoon bridge was reported to be under construction near Krutweiler. All these signs, individually and collectively, pointed strongly to the real likelihood of a large scale enemy attack on the Corps' north flank, the spearhead of which would probably be directed at us.

At this time our strategic position was further weakened by the sudden departure of the 10th Armored Division which, up to this time, had been in a position to assist us in the event of an attack. It was therefore imperative that everything possible be done to strengthen our positions. The TD platoon which had been attached to the 43rd was transferred to us, we now had the entire company. The supporting Engineers were recalled from their road work, assembled and alerted to move into the line as infantry. The balance of the 135th Engineers were placed in direct support while the 40th Field Artillery Group reconnoitered positions for possible support in the event of an emergency.

Our artillery intensified its shelling of suspected concentration points on this date. In addition, patrol activity was stepped up though all reported negative enemy information with the exception of the two previously mentioned. Enemy artillery in our sector totaled 313 rounds for the day. Increased machine gun and small arms fire was received all along our front. That night Jerry planes were again over the area though no bombs were dropped. Additional measures were taken to strengthen our defenses. The 135th Engineers were ordered to fortify Tettingen and Borg as well as to lay anti-tank and anti-personnel mine fields augmented with barbed wire and sandbags. A hasty mine field of 4000 anti-tank mines was begun between Borg and Wochern. Most of the work had to be done at night since the ground was under direct observation by the enemy.

19 Dec.—The tension over an impending attack was relieved somewhat. Two prisoners, who surrendered to C Troop at Tettingen, stated that they knew nothing about an offensive. They revealed gun positions and that they had been forced to sign statements that they would not leave their present positions which they would defend at all costs.

20-21 Dec.—The 20th and 21st were relatively quiet. Contrary to expectations there were no further indications of an attack. Actually the most recent events indicated that the enemy was definitely on the defensive. On the other hand, reports, rumors and conjectures continued to point toward an inevitable large scale attack by the Germans. Two OSS reports received on the night of the 21st added materially to speculation on the subject—one reported two enemy armored divisions en route from Trier to Merzig. In addition the towns of St. Wendel, Weiler and St. Engbert were reputedly assembly points for a large number of Troops and there was an additional Panzer Division concentrated east of Mettlach. Another report stated that the enemy would attack Borg this night. As a precautionary measure the TDs were ordered by higher headquarters to go into position immediately. This and other measures taken turned out to have been unnecessary as no unusual events occurred during the night other than some increase in air activity.

22 Dec.—B Troop sent a patrol into the Campholz Woods with the mission of taking prisoners. A four-man enemy patrol was encountered, though they fled so precipitously that no prisoners could be taken. Poor visibility due to snow prevented our patrol from giving chase. Another patrol, this from A Troop, encountered nine Germans in the Saarburg Forest. In the fire fight that ensued several of the enemy were killed and four captured. Other patrols during the day reported negative information. The artillery was busy all day firing a total of 1100 rounds of harassing fire.

At this time the 3rd Cavalry Group was attached to the 90th Division which had been withdrawn from its bridgehead across the Saar further south. The plan of the Division was to establish an OPLR and to organize defenses in depth, so as to be in a better position to retard and stop any large scale attack by the enemy. The Group was to organize and defend its zone in depth occupying the OPLR with the equivalent of one Squadron and to maintain contact with the XII Corps on the left and the 358th Infantry Regiment on the right. The 3rd Squadron was ordered (1) to withdraw from Tettingen during the night of the 22nd after having executed maximum demolitions since the OPLR did not include this town; (2) to hold the entire Group zone with F Company of the 43rd attached; (3) to hold forward positions in Besch, Wochern, Borg and Hellendorf with not more than two Rcn Troops (reinf.) and (4) to dispose the balance of the Squadron in depth along the general line Sehndorf-Eft. In compliance with these orders, Troops were withdrawn from Tettingen under cover of darkness. The three pillboxes were blown and the town left heavily mined and booby trapped.

The withdrawal from Tettingen brought no increase in enemy activity. They were apparently anxious to find if we had also evacuated Besch because they sent out a small patrol from which two prisoners were taken. They gave us a new identification—1st Battalion Wesel-Dusseldorf which we subsequently got to know more familiarly as the "Stomach Battalion"—they were all troops suffering from various digestive ailments. They had little appetite for continuing the fight as evidenced by the fact that seven more surrendered at Besch the following day.

24 Dec.—The Squadron rear echelon at Seirck as well as the Group Headquarters and most of the 43rd Squadron were bombed and strafed by 6-8 P-47s bearing American and British markings. The attack lasted about 15 minutes and in it some 25 men from the 43rd were wounded. In addition several vehicles including an ammunition truck were destroyed or damaged. It was believed at first that the planes were piloted by Germans but a report from higher headquarters somewhat later indicated that inexperienced American pilots had been responsible.

25 Dec.—Christmas was a very quiet day for us. Not a single round of either mortar or artillery was reported. Our regular patrols made no contact with the enemy though our own guns continued to fire harassing missions. A most unfortunate accident occurred though in which Lts. Finkbine, Barron and Griswold were all wounded. The accident occurred when an Engineer non-com who was showing the officers the locations of certain of our mine fields near Borg, accidentally tripped a wire and detonated one of the mines.

26 Dec.—This day was almost as quiet with only a few rounds of artillery and intermittent small arms fire. By this time our supporting Engineers had just about completed their job of laying mine fields. They had put in a field of 1000 mines and 50 trip flares around Besch, another field with anti-personnel and anti-tank mines and flares between Besch and Wochern and a larger field containing some 2600 mines of various types near Borg. They had also completed seven road blocks around Apach, Wilchen, Manderen and Ritzing so that we were well prepared for any counter-thrust by the enemy.

27 Dec.—Orders were received to step up our patrolling; first, to create the impression that we were becoming more aggressive and secondly, to capture prisoners daily and maintain current identifications of all units opposing us. Our patrols were to be increased in size to ten men and were to be sent out at least twice daily into the wooded sections along our front. In addition we were directed to obtain identifications whenever possible to a depth of five miles beyond our present positions during the period 28 December-4 January. Plans were immediately drawn up to supple-

ment the short range patrols with deep penetrating patrols to areas around Nennig, Sinz and Kesslingen.

29 Dec.—Under cover of darkness in the early morning our long range patrolling got under way. The patrol from C Troop had the mission of going to the vicinity of Sinz but was able to penetrate only as far as the northwest outskirts of Tettingen where it drew heavy machine gun fire and was forced to withdraw. The A Troop patrol did not have much better luck—attempts to reach the Oberleuken-Kesslingen area, it ran into two enemy mine fields where they inadvertently tripped a "Bouncing Betty" and gave their position away. The third patrol got as far as the woods along the Nennig-Tettingen road where they set up an ambush. They succeeded in ambushing a two-man patrol and killed both but were unable to reach the bodies to get identifications.

At night four more combat patrols went out. A six-man patrol from B Troop checking a large crater in the Borg-Oberleuken road, was driven off by heavy machine gun and rifle fire. One officer and 10 men from A Troop started reconnaissance towards the Oberleuken-Kesslingen area but were met by intense small arms fire from the A T ditch in the Saarburg Forest. F Company also sent out a strong patrol towards Sinz. As they were crossing the road northwest of Tettingen they were fired on by both machine guns and rifles. At this point three men of the patrol who were acting as a rear guard became separated from the main body and returned to their CP. The others continued on their way and were successful in reaching the Sinz-Remich road where they remained in ambush for several hours. No enemy were seen or heard during this period, but on their return trip they encountered an enemy ambush of some 15 men. The Germans opened up with two machine guns supplemented with rifle fire at point blank range of 10-12 feet. No casualties were suffered as a result but as our patrol dispersed, it ran into a mine field in which one man was killed and another seriously wounded. The results of these patrols indicated an alert enemy who was aggressive in taking steps to prevent our patrols from penetrating his lines.

30 Dec.—The next day similar patrols were dispatched which with one exception reported little or no enemy contact. The exception was a patrol of 11 men and Lt. Eddy from A Troop which was given the mission of crossing the Moselle into the sector occupied by the 2nd Cavalry Group, recross the river some miles further north in the vicinity of Remich and then to attempt to penetrate from the German rear as far as Nennig. It was found that the 2nd Cavalry was planning a similar patrol so that it was decided to combine them into a single strong patrol and attempt to attack Castle Thorn which the enemy

had reportedly been using as a headquarters. After a prearranged artillery barrage the joint patrol moved out toward their objective with A Troop covering the right flank. The attack on the castle could not be carried out—the German defenses and the natural fortifications of the castle were too strong. The patrol heard enemy movement to the east in the woods. Forming a line of skirmishers the patrol moved off in an effort to outflank the enemy. As they pushed on heavy and accurate mortar fire started falling on them. In the barrage, Lt. Eddy was seriously wounded and one man was killed. The group from the 2nd Cavalry had four killed, two wounded and three missing. The patrol withdrew across the river by means of boats while two men remained on the east side in an attempt to carry in the body of the A Troop man who had been killed. The Germans had followed continuing to harass the patrol as it withdrew so that the two men were obliged to plunge into the icy waters of the Moselle and swim for the west bank. It was later discovered that one of the two had never swum before but was still able to negotiate the treacherous waters.

31 Dec.—Recent attempts to get prisoners or to secure identifications had not been particularly successful inasmuch as the enemy was constantly on the alert to forestall all our efforts. A plan was therefore drawn up which it was hoped would produce the required result. On the night of the 31st a demonstration was put on in Besch which was intended to lead the enemy to believe that we had evacuated the town. Just before dark, several buildings were set on fire while the Engineers executed a series of demolitions. All the vehicles were then moved out of the town leaving behind only one Platoon of C Troop and one of TDs all dismounted, who hid themselves in houses. Two dismounted platoons from F Company were sent in just after dark and went into positions along each side of the road at the north edge of town. At 2000 a small enemy patrol was observed advancing cautiously along the road on the alert for a possible ambush. When they had advanced to within about 20 yards of our positions they were called on to surrender. In the fight that followed the enemy was able to withdraw before we could encircle them. One enemy was killed, however, and though the Germans did their best to prevent us from getting to the body, identification papers were obtained.

January—As the month of January opened, the Squadron, through Group, was still attached to the 90th Division; reinforced and supported by the 774th TD Battalion, the 135th Engineers and the 5th Field Artillery Group. In the sector between the Moselle and the Saar, our forces were on the defensive in the event that the enemy should attempt a large scale diversionary attack in conjunction with

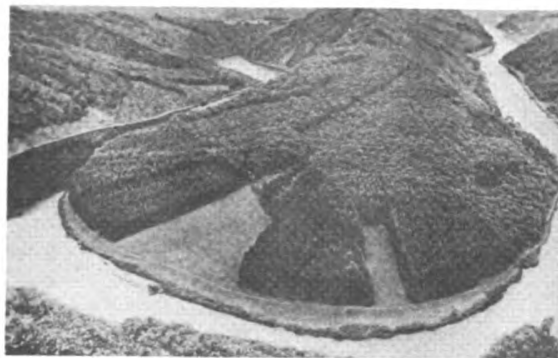
his main effort which was still being vigorously pursued in the Battle of the Ardennes. To the 3rd Cavalry Group was assigned the sector bordered on the left by the Moselle and on the right by a line running northeast through Tunting, Buschdorf and the Saarburg Forest. The zone was held by the 3rd Squadron—the 43rd was in reserve. The 90th Division was on our right.

1 Jan.—On New Year's Eve an 11-man ambush was set up in the Campholz Woods with instructions to remain there until a prisoner was taken and identifications secured. About 0745 a four-man patrol approached our ambush position. The patrol leader called on them to surrender as they approached but instead of complying they opened fire. In the ensuing struggle two Germans were killed and one captured. We attempted to gain possession of the two bodies but were driven off by the fire of a larger group of enemy who were attempting to outflank our patrol. Two more Germans were killed, however, before we withdrew.

The prisoner was from the 416th Infantry Division—not a new identification, but he did pin-point locations of all platoons of his Company, their CP as well as locations of Battalion and Regimental CPs. He further stated that two-thirds of his Company were German Air Force personnel and that their morale was very good despite the fact that they had been committed as infantry. Information of locations was immediately given to our artillery and they were taken under fire.

2 Jan.—An 11-man patrol from A Troop led by Lt. Schamberger set up another ambush in the Forest of Saarburg. They allowed an enemy patrol to approach within 25 yards before demanding surrender. Again the enemy opened fire which we returned wounding two Germans. Lt. Schamberger and two men attempted to capture the two who had been wounded. They were driven back by machine gun and rifle fire from strong positions along the anti-tank ditch. The Germans were able to recover the wounded and retreat to the safety of their positions north of the ditch. Our patrol then withdrew while the leader went to get reinforcements. The reinforced patrol later attempted to reoccupy its original position in the woods but while en route encountered an enemy ambush. Fortunately a dog barked and at the same time there was a rustling in the bushes to their direct front. The patrol dove for cover just as the enemy opened fire with an estimated 30 weapons. Our patrol withdrew without casualties.

3 Jan.—An attack had been planned on a pillbox on the eastern edge of the Campholz Woods which we knew was manned by the enemy. Early on the morning of the 3rd Sgt. McMillan left Borg with 21 men from B Troop who were to secure the initial assembly area in the woods from which the assault was to be



The Saar near Dreisbach

launched. En route they encountered an enemy patrol. The enemy immediately threw hand grenades, killing one and wounding three of our party. The balance of our patrol retaliated and after a short fight the enemy withdrew to the north. We then moved on to secure the assembly area where the attacking force under Capt. Howk was gathered by 0800. Heavy fog and mist limited observation and delayed the attack. After a preliminary artillery barrage the assault party moved out toward the pillbox; in front of which they found a large AP mine field. The accompanying Engineer group estimated it would require approximately two hours to breach the field. Consideration was then given to the possibility of clearing a path through it by using artillery but as the ground was solidly frozen this alternative was given up as being impracticable. Next the possibility of crossing the anti-tank ditch and attacking the pillbox from the rear was considered, but this too was of no use as the approaches to the ditch were protected by another mine field. Unable to cross the mine field, Capt. Howk was ordered to attack a German patrol which was harassing his flank. Before our troops could close with them, they withdrew to the north. At this point it was decided to call off the attack. The element of surprise had been lost and the enemy was reacting violently with both artillery and mortars.

Inasmuch as the 90th Division was planning an attack in this area, instructions were issued to curtail the combat patrols and raiding parties for fear of showing our hand. The new orders called for security observation posts, close in patrols, ambushes and long range reconnaissance patrols. The latter patrols were to make deep penetrations of enemy-held territory, to remain for considerable periods of time and to secure detailed information on the terrain, enemy obstacles and mine fields.

4 Jan.—During the night our troops in

Hellendorf were subjected to an increased amount of shelling—one round landing every five minutes all night long. No other enemy activity was reported. However, at 0800 three Germans were observed to the flank of F Company. Lt. Huggins organized a group of ten for an enveloping movement. As they moved out they were met by a concentration of enemy fire from both sides with an estimated ten enemy firing in each position. Simultaneously the original position of our men was taken under fire by some 15 Germans who were moving in on our right flank. Estimating the enemy to be about two infantry platoons Lt. Huggins regrouped his small force for a fire fight. As the enemy slowly withdrew we renewed our attack and, calling for artillery support, drove them from the woods.

Higher headquarters again was becoming concerned over an enemy attack particularly because of a heavy fog which would hide any concentrations of enemy forces from our sight. In addition, the 2nd Cavalry reported having heard 35 enemy trucks just north of our positions. As soon as the weather cleared a detailed aerial reconnaissance was made. Nothing unusual was seen though it did ascertain that what had been reported as an enemy smoke screen was only a dense fog bank rolling in again.

5 Jan.—All our patrols reported negative enemy information, although four Germans surrendered to us in Borg. From them it was learned that there were about sixty others in the southern part of the Campholz Woods, which was immediately given a TOT concentration of 120 rounds. In addition, the prisoners gave locations of headquarters, conditions of roads and sites of various other installations. Of particular interest was their statement that the 416th Division alone occupied the sector to our north between the Saar and Moselle rivers and that there were no tanks or self-propelled guns in their area. They knew nothing of any proposed attack.

7 Jan.—Effective at 0800 7 January the 3rd Cavalry Group was relieved of its attachment to the 90th Division and attached to the 94th Division which had just come into the area. The 3rd Squadron was to be relieved by the 376th Regiment and go to Division reserve. The relief, however, did not occur until the morning of the 9th as the Infantry was late in arriving.

On the morning of the 7th, a patrol was sent to the Campholz Woods to determine the effect of the TOT mentioned above. Our patrol encountered nine Germans on the edge of the woods. As our patrol leader believed that they formed part of a larger group, he instructed his small force to withdraw.

On this day the Psychological Warfare Branch of Corps broadcast an appeal to the enemy to surrender. One of our recent prisoners spoke over the loudspeaker telling of the

excellent treatment that he had received, the good food and the improved living conditions. No immediate results of the broadcast were evident.

8 Jan.—Officers from the 94th Division and from the 376th Regiment were oriented to make certain that the relieving troops would be familiar with the locations of our mine fields and with the various enemy dispositions.

9-18 Jan.—The relief of the Squadron was complete by 0730 on the 9th. All troops moved to a general assembly area in the vicinity of Grindorf. Necessary maintenance and rehabilitation were initiated immediately and continued for the next few days. In addition reconnaissance of possible defensive positions was started as a precaution against the ever present threat of a German counter thrust.

On the 14th a task force composed of Troops E and F plus a small headquarters under the command of Maj. Vaughn was organized to act as a mobile striking force and/or as a local reserve while the 94th Division made a series of limited objective attacks. Task Force Vaughn moved to Ober-Perl where it was further augmented by the addition of one platoon of C Troop the mission of the platoon was to give warning in the event of an enemy attack.

As the 376th pushed forward in its attack, TF Vaughn remained with it as local reserve. Defensive positions were taken up in the woods northeast of Besch to guard against a possible attack on the right flank.

A new Field Order, issued on the 18th, ordered the 3rd Squadron to relieve elements of the 301st Regiment in the Ripplingen-Dreibach sector. The actual execution of the order was dependent on the progress that the 301st made in its attack to the north.

19 Jan.—Relief of the 301st was scheduled for this day. The Squadron was ordered to move its reserve troop to Wellingen prepared to take over from the Infantry. The first to take over was A Troop which went into positions in Schank, Schwemlingen, Staudt, Dreisbach and Weiler. The Troop CP was established at Wellingen.*

20 Jan.—Squadron Headquarters plus E Troop and F Company moved to Wellingen while C Troop went to Biringen and initiated reconnaissance of its new area. B Troop relieved one Troop of the 43rd Squadron in the vicinity of Fitten and Hilbringen. Active patrolling was started immediately though no enemy contact was reported on this date; in fact there was no apparent enemy reaction to all of our activity — probably explained in part by the fact that intermittent snow squalls during the day rendered visibility practically nil.

21 Jan.—The next day a new patrol schedule was put into operation. We sent out four combat patrols—three demolitions and two contact. Two of the combat patrols were to be run daily in the Scheidwald Forest—one in

* See map page 182

the Hilbringen woods and one in the woods southwest of Hilbringen. One platoon of C Troop relieved A Troop in the vicinity of the Salt Mill, enabling A to strengthen its positions around Schwemlingen. At the same time their CP was moved to Budingen while C set up at Bethingen. Our position was strengthened by the 179th Combat Engineers of which one company was put in support of the Squadron. In addition to checking all demolitions in the area they were put to work clearing the roads which in some places were impassable because of recent heavy snows that had drifted in spots to depths of three to four feet. Passable roads were of the utmost importance to us particularly in the event of any enemy penetration.

The Germans were found to be in strong defensive positions across the Saar River from us. Innumerable pillboxes were facing us so that movement was limited to the hours of darkness. Their observation was good and the fire of machine guns from the pillboxes accurate.

23 Jan.—During the night an increase in enemy vehicular activity was noted and reported by various listening posts. Supporting artillery was given this information and they fired with good effect.

At this point we were relieved of attachment to the 94th Division. The 3rd Cavalry Group reverted to XX Corps control. The 241st Field Artillery Battalion was attached directly to the Group as well as one company from the 774th's TDs. The enemy on this date appeared to be improving his defensive positions by laying more barbed wire along certain sections of the east bank of the Saar, though no indications of any aggressiveness on his part were observed.

25 Jan.—Considerable enemy vehicular movement was heard during the night of the 24-25 together with much pounding and hammering, giving rise to speculation as to whether they might be preparing bridges. Good visibility as the day broke enabled our supporting artillery to fire several observed missions. Direct hits were made on three different groups of enemy personnel, two machine gun nests and two Volkswagens. In retaliation the enemy fired 32 rounds of mortar and artillery of which 12 rounds were believed to come from a 75 mm gun located in a tunnel just south of Mettlach. Just before dark a group of Jerries in the vicinity of Besseringen forgot the war and broke forth in song—E Troop observers added their bit to the party by contributing several well directed rounds. A short time later another group of about 50 were observed walking along the railroad tracks north of Merzig. A two-battalion TOT was placed on them and although an accurate estimate of the casualties could not be made it was obviously effective as agonized screams

were heard followed by the arrival of several ambulances.

At this time it was anticipated that we would soon receive new light tanks mounting 75 mm guns or possibly medium tanks. With this in mind F Company instituted training on the 75 mm gun.

A report was received which later proved erroneous, that the towns of Orscholz and Oberleuken had been evacuated by the enemy. Believing that Dreisbach might also be clear, a small patrol was sent into the town to investigate but as they approached one German was observed and others were heard talking which led them to believe that the town was occupied by at least one platoon.

26 Jan.—Good visibility the night of the 26th permitted the occupation of observation posts normally manned only during daylight hours. A party of 30 Germans was observed and immediately shelled. They dispersed but soon returned. A second shelling ended their night's work.

28 Jan.—Recent efforts to obtain prisoners and identifications had been unsuccessful. The Squadron received orders to take one in Dreisbach. C Troop sent a patrol of one officer and 20 men into the town at dark on the 28th. The patrol remained in observation for about an hour on the high ground southwest of town. As no sign of enemy activity was noted they moved in. Investigation of all houses and streets revealed that the Germans had pulled out so C Troop proceeded to garrison the town. This removed the last enemy hold on the west side of the river within the 3rd Cavalry Group zone.

Heavy snow during the day kept observation to a minimum, yet the enemy shelled our OP on the high ground south of Dreisbach and made three direct hits though the observer fortunately escaped unharmed. That night the weather cleared again affording good visibility. B Troop attempted to find out whether the Germans were occupying several suspected machine gun nests in the vicinity of Merzig. They fired two cal. 50's whose fire converged on the city. Their reply was fire from six enemy machine guns, five of which were promptly located and shelled by our artillery.

29 Jan.—Enemy harassing small arms, artillery and mortar fire was intensified on the 29th. A total of 83 rounds of artillery and 43 rounds of mortar fell in the Group sector. That night A Troop captured a two-man enemy patrol at Schwemlingen. They had crossed the river at Besseringen by crawling over the blown bridge where they were observed by our outposts and allowed to pass. Our outpost then alerted the platoon reserve who surrounded and captured them. The prisoners, upon interrogation, claimed to be members of a non-existent unit from which they had deserted and that there were 24 Tiger Royal

tanks concentrated in Besseringen and other information obviously untrue. Later they were proved to be members of the 17 SS Panzer Division.

30-31 Jan.—The last days of January were extremely quiet. The enemy was apparently content to sit and wait. No contacts were reported by the various patrols while artillery and mortar fire dwindled away to almost nothing.

February—As the month of February opened the Group was still defending the Saar River line from Dreisbach on the north down to the Nied River. The Squadron was operating with the three Reconnaissance Troops abreast and with F Company in reserve. The Squadron CP was in Wellingen. E Troop was set up in direct firing positions just outside Wellingen with forward observation posts on the high ground looking down upon the Saar and across to the enemy strongly entrenched in their positions of the Siegfried line—a maze of pillboxes, machine gun nests, barbed wire entanglements and mine fields. The Reconnaissance Troops at this time were disposed as follows: C Troop in Dreisbach, Bethingen and intermediate points; A in Schwemlingen, Schank, Staudt and Budingen; B in Ripplingen, Rech, Ballern, Hilbringen and Fitten. Severe weather conditions necessitated the maintenance of strong points in the river towns with the intervening gaps covered by strong combat patrols. The terrain was generally hilly and wooded so that the supporting Engineers were kept busy keeping the road net open. Regular contact at stated hourly intervals was being kept up with the 94th Division on our north flank. We were opposed by an unaggressive enemy about whom we knew little due to lack of recent prisoners. It was, however, customary for him to shell our positions with light harassing fire, both artillery and mortar, each day supplemented by intermittent machine gun fire from the many pillboxes across the river.

1 Feb.—The first day of the month was uneventful except for one patrol from F Company which was dispatched to the area north of Nohn with the mission of taking prisoners. The adjacent Infantry had located an enemy observation post in that vicinity so it was believed to offer good possibilities as an objective. Our supporting artillery first laid down a barrage of fire after which the patrol moved out from the Salt Mill. As they were working their way along one member of the patrol slipped in an icy ditch and accidentally discharged his weapon. The patrol leader, Lt. Eggleston, believing that they had now lost the element of surprise withdrew temporarily and then started out again on a different route. The patrol made good progress until they reached a point about half a mile northeast of Nohn where they suddenly drew heavy enemy machine gun fire. Our patrol was un-



The Red Cross truck comes to F Company at Wellingen

able to advance in the face of this intense fire and was finally forced to withdraw.

The next day further attempts to get a prisoner were made. It was decided to send several patrols across the river. The river, however, swollen by melting ice and snow, proved an insurmountable barrier. B Troop was unable to make a crossing in a rubber boat which had been procured from the Engineers so Capt. Baldwin attempted to swim across carrying a line with him which could be used to guide the boat. After getting almost half way across, he was forced back by the swiftness of the current and the intense and numbing cold.

2-3 Feb.—Our supporting artillery was very active giving the German positions on the east bank of the river a thorough going over. Apparently the enemy believed an attack was imminent as they were obviously nervous. They used a great number of flares up and down the river but with this exception there was no visible reaction to our activity.

7 Feb.—Frequent attempts were made during this period to effect a river crossing but it was not until the night of the 7th that we were able to navigate the still rampaging stream. On this night T/Sgt. Teller and three men from B Troop in an assault boat manned by eight Engineers made the crossing though they were carried some 300 yards downstream in the process. The patrol then worked its way northeast for a considerable distance. They observed no signs of enemy activity, so it was decided to return. On the return trip the boat was again caught by the current and they were unable to guide the boat back to the spot from which they had started. The landing was made in an area covered with thick bushes through which it was impossible to pull the boat. They attempted to pull the boat upstream but in doing so, it suddenly struck and detonated a submerged mine. One of the Engineers was injured.

8 Feb.—The following night another patrol

composed of one officer and three men from F Company in addition to five engineers successfully negotiated the river crossing near Ripplingen. After landing they moved north along the river for some 300 yards where they observed a flare from a pillbox a short distance to their right. The patrol halted and watched for about twenty minutes. It then withdrew 100 yards to the south. At this point they turned east heading for a pillbox whose guns covered the river flats. Forward progress was stopped a short distance inland by an AT ditch where three more enemy flares illuminated the terrain in a sudden glare. For the next two hours they remained here observing, noting barbed wire entanglements and plotting the location of what appeared to be a mine field on the far side of the ditch. Everything was quiet and as no signs of activity were noted they returned to the river and recrossed. As they moved south back towards Ripplingen they ran into an unmarked enemy mine field. One member of the patrol tripped a wire setting off four S-Mines resulting in injuries to seven of the men.

Several other instances in which patrols encountered unmarked mine fields occurred at this time. As most of these fields covered potential crossing sites, it was concluded that they had been installed several months earlier when the Germans were preparing their defenses for an attack on Merzig.

Warm weather was coming on, which combined with heavy rains, was developing a critical situation on the roads all through the Corps sector. Our Engineers were detached to assist road work to the rear and their place taken by civilian workers who volunteered their services. Enemy activity was negligible while our guns contented themselves with generally harassing fire and targets of opportunity—mostly small groups of enemy who were observed working around the numerous pillboxes.

9 Feb.—During the night of the 9th of February B Troop sent patrols to the blown bridges at Merzig and Besseringen. S/Sgt. McMillan and four men went to the former and took up positions near the west end of the bridge. Soon they saw about fifteen enemy working near the other bank apparently laying mines and setting up barbed wire. The working party was protected by a machine gun which was set up just north of the bridge as well as by the guns in a pillbox to the south—a combination prohibiting movement on the west approach to the bridge. Our patrol withdrew. Information of the working party was given to the artillery who immediately placed a TOT on the position.

10 Feb.—Orders were received to discontinue cross-river patrols and instead we were instructed to develop ways of luring the enemy to our side. The following day one German appeared to help us out. B Troop picked

him up along the road between Rech and Ripplingen. Though he was carrying his pistol in his hand he immediately shouted "Kammerad" as our patrol appeared and surrendered to them. It was found that he had crossed the river with three others in an assault boat during the night. Their mission was to observe artillery positions and troop movements near Weiler, but he had ducked into a house in Rech and hidden there until daylight. He gave information on mine fields, strength and armaments of various pillboxes as well as the site of the crossing which many of their patrols had been using.

12 Feb.—For the next few days no events of particular interest occurred. The enemy was content to sit, alert but defensive, in the comparative comfort of his pillboxes and bunkers, tossing over an occasional round of mortar or artillery to remind us of his existence. Regular patrols continued to operate and without exception returned with "no enemy contact" reports. On the morning of the 12th, though, an alert observer spotted about twenty-five enemy doing calisthenics in a field. B Troop immediately opened fire with their mortars and succeeded in inflicting several casualties.

13-16 Feb.—It was at this time that Phantom, who had been with us on the Moselle, returned in accordance with orders from SHAEF. It was hoped that increased activity on our side might not only lure patrols to us but, more important, that we might succeed in causing the enemy to keep the 11th Panzer Division committed in our area instead of being sent north to oppose a 9th Army attack which was imminent. As part of the plans which were formulated, two platoons of tanks from F Company were sent along the Budingen-Fitten road where, on high ground, they were under direct enemy observation. About a mile south of Hilbringen, Phantom set up at night and from just after dark until about midnight created a varied pattern of sound including heavy tank movement, starting of engines, backing up, racing motors, long periods of movement on the road, then slowing and stopping of tanks. A very definite enemy reaction was noted. The tanks drew both small arms and artillery fire along the road and also in the vicinity of Hilbringen. Planes were heard overhead and mortar and flare activity increased substantially. The regular patrol to Dreisbach from F Company drew so many flares that they had to try three times before getting through to the town. The patrol found three road blocks along the Dreisbach-Shank road which had not existed previously.

The next day, Phantom put on another demonstration in Weiler. At the same time the garrison in Dreisbach was increased to thirty men and a strong ambush patrol of fifteen went into positions near the west end of the Merzig bridge with three of the men falling back to make hammering sounds simulating

construction work in order to further arouse the curiosity of the enemy. This second demonstration brought increased artillery, mortar and flare activity but still there was no attempt made by the Germans to cross the river to investigate.

It was at this time that the 5th Rangers on our left flank captured a PW who gave information regarding an OP maintained by the Germans in Dreisbach. Ten men were reported to be in the last house in the north edge of town and at night only one guard was on duty outside the house. This story seemed highly improbable in view of the fact that we were regularly garrisoning the town. However, orders were given to reconnoitre the house and to observe for routes of attack. A patrol was sent which observed the house for three quarters of an hour. Seeing no sign of activity they moved up to the house and looked into the windows. As they tried to get into the house from the rear, a burst of machine gun fire came from the east side of the river. There was no one in the house. After the patrol had reported its findings a careful study was made of aerial photos. This revealed the presence of a hitherto unnoticed house further north which was the logical one for the Germans to use but it was located in the Rangers section and turned over to them for further handling.

For the most part activity remained at a low level—our patrols still made no contact with the enemy though there did seem to be more movement across the river on the night of the 14th—a twenty-minute column of vehicles believed to be tanks was reported and at the same time six German planes were heard over the area. The artillery opened up on the German column and scored at least one direct hit as a fire broke out in it halting the column. The next morning civilians were observed stretching wires and other civilians with rifles were seen shooting at one of our liaison planes.

16 Feb.—The 16th must have been laundry day for the Germans as several groups were observed washing clothes and drying them around the pillboxes. Further efforts on their part were discouraged by the artillery which opened up on them killing and wounding several. A Troop also opened up with their mortars and in return received an estimated 6,000 rounds of harassing machine gun fire—no damage done.

Visibility for the next few days was extremely limited and the period passed without incident other than artillery, mortar and harassing small arms fire.

The 94th Division on our north flank had, during the month, been making a series of limited objective attacks against the switch line which had halted our progress in the latter part of November. They had managed to extend a salient along the Moselle River into

the enemy lines as far north as Kreuzweiler, though the high ground to the east around Munsingen, Kirf and Faha which was teaming with enemy pillboxes still remained under German control. The enemy had retaliated with a number of counter-attacks using infantry and a few tanks but these had been unsuccessful for the most part, though they did keep the 94th from developing any real momentum. As their attack progressed, it was decided by higher headquarters to go all out to clear the Saar-Moselle triangle—the 94th was ordered to clear the Borg-Munsingen highway—to seize the high ground and to breach that part of the Siegfried line. As soon as this had been done the 10th Armored would pass through them, attacking northeast and try to seize intact the bridges over the Saar at Wiltingen and Kanzen. Our mission was to be virtually as before—to aggressively defend the Saar line and to keep contact with our flank elements. As the attack developed we were to be particularly observant of enemy reaction to it around the pillboxes to our east to see if there were any indications of a withdrawal.

The night of the 19-20 five flying bombs were seen going southwest over the Squadron area. They were the first we had seen since November on the Moselle. Patrols were sent to the bridges at Besseringen and Merzig for prisoners. Though they both waited several hours it appeared the enemy was content to stay on his own side of the river.

The Corps attack mentioned above progressed satisfactorily.—The switch line was broken and the two enemy divisions which had been manning the fortifications were smashed. The 10th Armored had pushed out and seized the high ground near the confluence of the Saar and Moselle. As a result Corps further ordered the 94th and 10th to exploit the breakthrough, to attack and seize Trier and to expand the bridgehead on the east side of the Saar. Our mission remained the same, but we were strengthened by the attachment of two companies from the 5th Ranger Battalion and ordered to make an attack at dawn the 22 February to seize and hold certain pillboxes to the north and to establish an OPLR overlooking the east bank of the Saar.

22 Feb.—The attack proved to be unnecessary—the Rangers moved out on schedule but found that the Germans had withdrawn during the night and by noon Squadron Headquarters was able to report that the area was clear of enemy and that the Rangers had established OPs on the high ground along the river northeast of Nohn and also that they were occupying the pillboxes south of Orscholz. However, as we did not intend to hold them permanently and it was feared that the enemy might attempt to infiltrate back to them, about twenty were blown the following day by the Engineers.

23 Feb.—Orders were received detaching the Rangers. This meant that we would have to relieve them in the Nohn area. C Troop took over and moved its CP to Nohn leaving only a rear echelon in Bethingen.

To the north the 94th and 10th Armored divisions were still attacking with the former successfully making a crossing of the Saar in the vicinity of Hamm. To further confuse and harass the enemy we were ordered to stage a demonstration by fire on enemy positions on the east side of the river in our zone with particular attention to Merzig. We were to use every available weapon and an unlimited amount of ammunition. In addition we were given the support of two Battalions of Field Artillery. At 2030 on the 23rd all hell broke loose for the Germans. The tanks ran in and out of the river towns, troops already in the towns tore madly around in their vehicles, every weapon—pistols, rifles, 30 and 50 calibre machine guns, 37s, 75s, 60 and 81 mm. mortars, and even bazookas were blazing away all along the river front. The artillery poured shells at the rate of 125 an hour across the river. At first the enemy paid little attention to this sudden outburst but as it continued without let-up, he gradually began to retaliate with machine gun and mortar fire. Soon 20 mm. shells began to fall in our area and finally their heavier artillery joined so that there was no question about our having succeeded in adding to their general confusion.

While all this was going on C Troop sent a patrol comprised of Lt. McCreary and Cpl. Greenstein across the river to make a deep penetration. Their mission was to learn whether there were any indications of a withdrawal from the positions of that part of the Siegfried line which faced us.

24 Feb.—XX Corps had ordered the demonstration to continue for thirty-six hours so the 24th brought no decrease in our fires which actually were augmented by borrowing some TD 90 mm guns from the 818 Battalion. Three of these were given to us and placed in position in the vicinity of Schwemlingen and Hilbringen. Soon it was observed that a number of fires had been started in Merzig and before the day was over the city was a veritable inferno.

When the demonstration was finished and the din of the many guns had faded away a count was taken of the amount of ammunition expended by the 3rd Cavalry Group:

75 mm	6,892 Rounds
37 mm	5,081 Rounds
81 mm Mortar ..	2,530 Rounds
60 mm Mortar ..	1,881 Rounds
50 cal. MG	91,600 Rounds
30 cal. MG	117,050 Rounds
Bazooka	41 Rounds

The extent of the damage caused was as follows: seven pillboxes, two houses and one mortar position destroyed; 34 pillboxes and 37

houses badly damaged in addition to an indeterminate number of enemy killed or wounded.

27 Feb.—Orders were received attaching the 3rd Cavalry Group to the 94th Division. Once more we were to be relieved by elements of the 26th Division which had heretofore been disposed on the right flank of the Group sector. The relief was to be completed by 0700 28th February. Responsibility for the sector passed to the 26th at 1800 on the 27th as the relief had been completed by that time and the Squadron was directed to proceed to an assembly area in the vicinity of Freudenberg preparatory to commitment in the bridgehead area east of the river near Saarburg.

As our parting gesture in the area where we had spent so many weeks, C Troop in Driesbach contacted a three-man enemy patrol. In the short fire fight that ensued two prisoners were taken who were identified as members of the Volksturm. They confirmed the belief that had been prevalent for some time that they had been manning the pillboxes opposing us.

28 Feb.—The morning of the 28th the entire Squadron moved to Freunderburg and vicinity. The Squadron Rear moved to Perl.

March—The 1st day of March found the Squadron in the Freudenburg area in Group reserve alerted for commitment across the Saar River. The 94th Division, to which we had been attached, was holding a bridgehead from which the 10th Armored was attacking towards Trier.

2 Mar.—The next day brought orders from the 94th to move across the Saar. The 3rd Cavalry Group was to take up positions on the west side of the Ruwer River from the confluence of the Ruwer and Moselle in the vicinity of Pzälzel south to Geisenberg. The 3rd Squadron was given the southern portion of the area with the 43rd Squadron on its left flank. The 302nd Infantry Regiment was the right. As isolated groups of enemy were reported remaining in the new zone, we were ordered to be prepared to fight into the newly assigned positions. We were further ordered to prepare all bridges across the Ruwer for demolition though they would actually be blown only on Group order.

3 Mar.—At 0800 3 March the Squadron moved out for the new area. B Troop was the first to make contact with the enemy. They were fired on from their flank about 1100 as they were reconnoitering a bridge over the Ruwer. In the fire fight that followed seven prisoners were taken. The troop suffered the loss of one man who was killed. None of the other Troops encountered any resistance.

Upon completion of the move the Squadron was disposed in the following positions: * The Squadron CP was at Hochweiler with F Company in reserve; C Troop in Pluwig, Wilzenburg and Willmerich; B Troop in Gus-

terath and A Troop in Irsch and on the high ground to the east over looking the Ruwer, and E Troop was in Franzenheim. Heavy enemy artillery fell as the troops were moving into position. During the night B Troop made an attack on a small rubber factory near the river. Considerable enemy activity had been observed around the building in daylight. Employing a fifteen-man combat patrol we drove approximately thirty Germans from the factory. Three of them were taken prisoner and several others were wounded.

A detailed reconnaissance had been made of all bridges over the Ruwer. With the exception of one bridge, they had all been destroyed.

After dark A Troop reconnoitering by fire, moved into Korlingen with one platoon and picked up two prisoners who offered little resistance. Two sections pushed on further and took possession of the high ground west of Gutweiler.

It is interesting to note that of the 495 rounds of enemy artillery that fell in the Group sector on this day, all but 16 fell in the 3rd Squadron zone.

The general plan of defense in the new positions was simple and effective. By taking advantage of the valley through which the Ruwer River flowed, the troops were situated in the forward towns and on all high ground west of the river where they had excellent observation. At night strong points of armored cars and automatic weapons as a perimeter defense were set up in coordination with well located listening posts. The assault guns were in indirect firing positions while the tanks were so situated that they might launch a quick attack in the event of any enemy penetration of our thinly held positions.

4 Mar.—A Troop made a house to house check up in Korlingen during which they rounded up 23 Germans who were all taken prisoners and all identified as being members of the 256th Volksgrenadier Division. During the day a wire line which had just been laid from Wilzenburg to Geisenburg was cut and booby trapped with three U.S. helmets loaded with rocks and about four pounds of TNT. The device was set to go off at the slightest touch. Patrols were sent out to flush out any enemy that might still be lurking in the woods. The enemy had apparently withdrawn, however, as no contact was reported. Large groups were observed to the east of the river, and reported to the artillery. About noon time an estimated twenty-five enemy with two machine guns attempted to retake Korlingen but their attack was broken up by our artillery and by small arms fire from A Troop.

5 Mar.—The Squadron received orders to prepare plans for the location of minefields, road blocks, booby traps, etc. in our zone as a precaution against a possible attack. Again groups of Germans were observed to the east

and given to the assault guns and supporting artillery as lucrative targets. Enemy artillery continued to be active and it was estimated that there were about three battalions opposing us.

A check was made to determine the number of civilians in the front line towns which revealed approximately 2,000 in the various towns occupied by the Squadron. Many of these so-called civilians were members of the Volksturm and some were even regular soldiers home on furlough. It presented quite a problem to segregate the military from the civilian. As an added precaution curfew hours were established and travel between towns strictly prohibited.

At this time orders were received by Group Headquarters relieving the Group from its attachment to the 94th and assigning to it the 26th Division—effective on relief of the 94th by the 26th.

6 Mar.—There was a heavy early morning haze on the ground in the early morning of the 6th. The night had been comparatively calm but with the dawn all was peaceful and quiet. Then came a report from A Troop that an estimated 60-90 enemy infantrymen were occupying the high ground to the east of Irsch (PWs later stated they were a battalion). They had crossed the river and moved upon the hill under cover of the fog. About 0730 they started an attack down the slope in an attempt to cut off Korlingen and Gutweiler. The attack was supported by heavy artillery fire. A Troop immediately opened up with intense machine gun fire. At the same time the balance of A Troop was alerted together with the platoon of tanks which was in Irsch as well as a second platoon of tanks located in Hockweiler. The tanks were brought up under the personal leadership of Lt. Col. Wallach in his bantam. Up they came through Irsch circling around to attack the enemy's rear and cut him off. The platoons of A Troop in Korlingen and Gutweiler laid down heavy machine gun fire. As the tanks approached, the enemy stepped up his artillery fire. The fury of our weapons soon succeeded in slowing, then stopping the enemy attack. Soon he began to break and run and to surrender in small groups. By 0830 the battle was over with most of the enemy either killed or captured, although shells continued to fall around Irsch in battalion volleys for some time. A count of prisoners revealed that 100 had been taken while we had suffered only one minor casualty. The prisoners were rounded up in Korlingen where 25 of them were killed by a shell from one of their own guns which landed squarely in their midst. The prisoners stated the attack had been made with between 200 and 300 men with the objective of establishing a bridgehead on the west side of the river in conjunction with an attack by the 2nd SS Mountain Division on the

south against the 94th Division. During and after the attack a total of over 1,000 rounds of enemy artillery fell in the Korlingen-Gutweiler-Irsch triangle a good portion of which fell on the positions of the supporting 241st Field Artillery Battalion, killing and wounding several of their men.

As things developed during the day, our situation appeared more and more ominous. Early in the morning an armored car from Group Headquarters had encountered an enemy road block of about 10 men in the 302nd Regiment area well behind what was reported to be the front line. Soon after this the driver of one of our ammunition trucks, Pvt. Cole, investigating a reported ambush in Steinbach, to our south, drew heavy machine gun and small arms fire. He observed approximately 150 enemy along a ridge near there who were apparently laying a mine field. Then he saw three U.S. trucks driving south along the road leading out of Pellingen, over which the Squadron had moved a few days before, hit an enemy ambush and be taken prisoners. After engaging in a fire fight he was forced to withdraw from his point of observation but succeeded in getting through to Squadron Headquarters to deliver his load and report his information. As the day progressed, it was found that the 3rd Battalion of the 302nd Regiment on our south was in a serious position. Three self-propelled 88 mm guns had been brought up by the enemy and were subjecting the Battalion CP to direct fire from two sides. The enemy had made a break-through and had nearly succeeded in cutting off the Battalion. It was, therefore, necessary to take immediate steps to protect our south flank. On orders from the Group Commander A Troop of the 43rd plus one section of TDs were attached to the 3rd Squadron and placed in position around Pellingen. One platoon of F Company was sent to further strengthen these positions. At the same time the 376th Regiment was committed by the 94th Division to attack the enemy salient and to restore the original line. The counter-attack by the 376th was suc-

cessful and by the next day the emergency was over.

7 Mar.—On the 7th 600 rounds of artillery fell in the Group zone so that there was no noticeable decrease in their activity. Additional information confirming current opinion that we were opposed by an aggressive enemy was obtained from some prisoners taken on this day. They stated that the 6th SS Division (Nord) had arrived in the area opposite us and that they had been scheduled to attack together with the Battalion Kobbitsch, which had made the attack on Irsch. They also stated that another attack was scheduled for the 8th or 9th by the 6th SS, the 136th Infantry Division and the 2nd Mountain Division with the objective of cutting off Trier which had just been taken by the 10th Armored.

8 Mar.—On the 8th of March orders were received by the 3rd Cavalry Group to relieve elements of the 10th Armored on the north flank as far as the Moselle and to subsequently attack eastward. At the same time the 16th Cavalry Group was to be attached. The 3rd Squadron was ordered in turn to prepare for relief by elements of the 43rd Squadron and the 94th Division and then to assemble in Konz Karthaus prepared to take over from the 417th Infantry Regiment. We were to initiate prompt reconnaissance of our new zone before making the relief.

9 Mar.—Enemy activity subsided noticeably. Less than 100 rounds of artillery fell in the Group sector on the 8th, nor were any prisoners taken this date which led to the theory that the enemy might be withdrawing from the river. The following morning though this theory was well shattered when a long column of enemy vehicles, tracked and artillery, were observed moving into Osburg. They were taken under fire by our artillery but despite several hits, they continued on their way as they were seen shortly afterwards in the vicinity of Thomm.

10 Mar.—Relief of the Squadron Troops was completed on the 9th and by morning the following day, all had closed in the temporary



Saarburg

assembly area in the vicinity of Konz Karthaus with orders to initiate relief of the 417th that night. With the change in missions came orders relieving Group of its attachment to the 94th Division. We reverted to XX Corps control once more as part of the general plan of attack which gave us the mission of protecting the Corps from any enemy attack that might be launched from the Hunnsruck Mountains while the 94th, 26th, 80th and 65th Divisions were pushing east and southeast.

11 Mar.—Squadron dispositions were generally as follows: Squadron Headquarters together with E Troop and F Company at Kenn; B Troop in Kirsch and Longuich; A Troop and C Troop were nearby; C Troop relieved A Company of the 417th which had been almost completely wiped out by an enemy attack. The Squadron was ordered to reconnoitre to Hill 425 and to protect the left flank of the 43rd from any enemy counter-attack from the Fell area.

12 Mar.—As part of the Corps plan of attack the 16th Cavalry Group was attached to the 3rd Group forming the 316th Provisional Brigade. The mission was to seize and hold the enemy strongpoint at Osburg. The first step was taken by the 43rd Squadron the morning of the 12th when with two troops they advanced to seize the high ground to their south and east with particular reference to hills 407 and 421. They did not encounter much ground opposition but did receive intense artillery, rocket and nebelwerfer fire. As they were the only force attacking on the whole Corps front at this time, the enemy was able to concentrate all of his available artillery against them. However, shortly afterwards B Troop of the 3rd Squadron attacked with Hill 425 as their objective. Mounted on a platoon of tanks they moved out at 1030. Progress was slow due to intense artillery fire which the enemy had rapidly shifted to meet this new threat. Moving southeast one tank hit a mine and was put out of action while the others under heavy artillery fire were temporarily forced to fall back to Riol. Starting out again at 1400 B Troop again met heavy enemy fire as they moved forward, but they continued to advance until they encountered a road block which they could not reduce immediately. Engineers were sent up, however, and after they had demolished the block the Troop moved forward again and occupied hill 425 where they dug themselves in for the night.

C Troop was relieved and moved to an assembly area at Longuich.

The 12th had been a busy one for the Germans. In addition to contending with our attacks, their artillery had literally rained shells upon the Group sector, about 3,700 rounds of artillery, 350 rounds of rocket fire and 200 of mortars were received, which actually totaled more than was falling on the rest of the Corps front. It was the highest ever

recorded by the 3rd Cavalry Group in a single day.

13 Mar.—During the night enemy activity had been limited to moderate harassing fire and flares. A slight amount of vehicular activity had been reported. At 0840 our front came to sudden life as a force of three enemy tanks supported by approximately fifty infantrymen launched an attack against our positions. The attack was preceded by a barrage of some 250 rounds of artillery. The troops were forced to withdraw slightly from the east side of the hill which they were holding because of the intensity of the barrage. We fell back to a position from which we were better able to repel an attack of this nature. Our own tanks which were sent to the top of the hill met an abnormal amount of bazooka fire and were forced to pull back to the reverse side of the slope. Two of the tanks had been struck by enemy fire. As the German tanks strove to drive us from the crest of the hill, we opened up with every available weapon including the TDs and the 37s on the armored cars. So effective was our fire that one enemy tank was knocked out, the officer in command was killed and the other tanks were obliged to pull back to the east. No German succeeded in reaching the high ground. By 1000 the attack had been repulsed with no loss of ground. The full extent of the German casualties could not be determined. We had lost two officers and one enlisted man killed, thirteen men wounded, one armored car had been knocked out in addition to the two tanks. These small quick thrusts by the enemy were not gaining any ground but they were inflicting heavy casualties on our troops and were especially harassing. This attack was outstanding for its fierceness and its intensity.

After the attack had been repulsed B Troop reorganized on the high ground. It was believed that the enemy might make another attempt to gain control of the hill and C Troop was sent to reinforce B. On the following day C took over and allowed the others to assemble in Riol.

On the hill above Riol our troops had been dismounted and had acted as doughboys. They were fed from tanks that moved from foxhole to foxhole. For protection against the terrific enemy shelling, the B Troop CP was set up in a medium tank. A formidable perimeter defense was organized utilizing tanks, armored cars and TDs. From positions on the ridge we had excellent observation.

In the afternoon, A Troop sent combat patrols out of Fastrau to probe in the direction of Fell to see if it would be possible to occupy the town. The patrols advanced to a point from which they could watch the town of Neiderfell as well as the road which lead into it. They observed an eight-man enemy patrol as it entered a mill situated on the road north of the village. Our patrols continued to probe

the Fell area for additional avenues of approach.

At 1700 the enemy launched another counter-attack. F Company laid down a wall of fire on about sixty Germans and soon broke the assault. About 25 of the attacking force were killed and eight more were taken prisoner. The few that remained fled in haste and made no further attempt to take our positions. We suffered no casualties. Later in the afternoon C Troop advanced east to seize an important crossroad. They had not gone far before they received direct fire from an 88 which was covering a road block. It was impossible to remove the block as the enemy had excellent observation and was placing direct fire on it. C Troop, forced to pull back, planned to resume the attack the following morning after the Engineers had had a chance to reduce the road block under cover of darkness.

14 Mar.—On the morning of the 14th, the Squadron received orders to attack and seize the town of Fell. An assault force consisting of one platoon from A Troop and a platoon of tanks attacked from the north along the Fastrau-Fell road working their way along both sides of the road. As they moved up they were followed by Engineers who swept the road. The tanks followed in close support. By noon they had advanced to Neiderfell. So far they had encountered no enemy resistance. However, in attempting to move out of Neiderfell toward Fell, they received heavy machine gun fire from a road block located between the two towns. The block, a large crater, was defended by German heavy machine guns. The tank-dozer was immediately brought up and as soon as the crater had been filled, our forces overran the defenders and moved on into Fell against small arms fire only. The town was occupied by 1430. The rest of the afternoon was spent in ferreting out enemy from cellars and various other hiding places. The enemy continued to hold the high ground south of the town and harassed our troops with small arms fire as they moved about.

15 Mar.—The next day was comparatively quiet for the Squadron. The enemy had apparently moved most of his artillery south to oppose the attack of the 94th which was driving for Reinsfeld.

16 Mar.—The breathing spell was short-lived. The 16th was a particularly bad day. During the night B Troop had sent a patrol to the edge of the woods where they drew heavy small arms, mortar and artillery fire. The patrol withdrew to its original position. Later in the day another attempt was made to capture the crossroads. One platoon from B Troop mounted on a platoon of Tanks from F Company with the rest of the tanks in close support moved forward. They suddenly received 88 mm fire from virtually point-blank range. Shifting so as to travel along the edge of the woods, the tanks again advanced and

were again fired upon by 88s at extremely close range. The enemy guns were so well concealed that one shell passed right through the leading tank without the driver realizing that he had even been hit. He continued forward nearly overrunning one of the 88s before he was finally hit again and knocked out. In a shorter space of time than it takes to read this, all five tanks were hit and knocked out of action by this highly effective fire. It was a disastrous expedition for us—twenty of our men were killed, wounded or missing. Those who succeeded in getting back reported that they had observed a large number of enemy in black uniforms, which confirmed the belief of PWs that they were SS men in the area. An eight-man patrol was sent out to determine the extent of the damage and to make another reconnaissance of the area. As they approached the spot they were subjected to intense machine gun fire not only from the enemy positions but also from the 50s on our knocked-out tanks which the Germans were now manning. Four men from the patrol failed to return. Shortly afterwards the enemy withdrew from this position apparently to avoid being outflanked by the 4th Armored Division and other elements of the XII Corps which had crossed the Moselle and were driving south-east to their rear. Subsequently a detailed reconnaissance of the area revealed that the newly dug foxholes on the ridge were numerous enough to confirm the belief that the enemy had held the position with at least a battalion together with four 88 mm guns and four 105 mm Howitzers. A few days later eight of the missing men returned and reported that they had been well treated by the German medics. As all available transportation had been destroyed by Allied planes, they had not been evacuated to the rear. They had made good their escape quite easily as the German guards were quite lax in the performance of their duties and apparently did not care whether they got away or not.

Pvt. Wysocki of F Company had an experience of particular interest as a result of this engagement. Having been captured when his tank and guns were knocked out he was herded along with the enemy as they retreated east the next day. As they marched along the column was repeatedly strafed by our fighter planes and Wysocki later reported that they were mortally afraid of our "Jabos", abandoning their transports and fleeing on foot. Wysocki, speaking fluent Polish argued for three days with several enemy soldiers of Polish descent trying to persuade them to surrender. He finally "sold" them so they turned around and headed west. Starting from a point some 83 kilometers east of Trier, he and 16 enemy soldiers started the long walk back to our lines. Whenever they encountered other groups of enemy soldiers, Wysocki would be hidden in their midst. Eventually they succeed-

ed in getting back to the allied lines east of Trier where Wysocki turned his prisoners over to the 16th Cavalry. He rejoined us a few days later in Ottweiler.

Later in the day, of the 16th, Squadron was notified that it would be relieved by the 16th Cavalry Group. The orders to be prepared to make an attack on Thomm and to push patrols on to Herl that same night. Upon relief, which was completed by 2000, all troops pulled back in reserve in the Kenn-Kirsch area.

17 Mar.—There was a sudden change in plans. Group Headquarters received notice that the 16th Cavalry would be detached and that our Group would go into SHAEF reserve. The 3rd Squadron remained in the vicinity of Kenn until the 19th when movement was made to the Feyen Barracks in Trier.

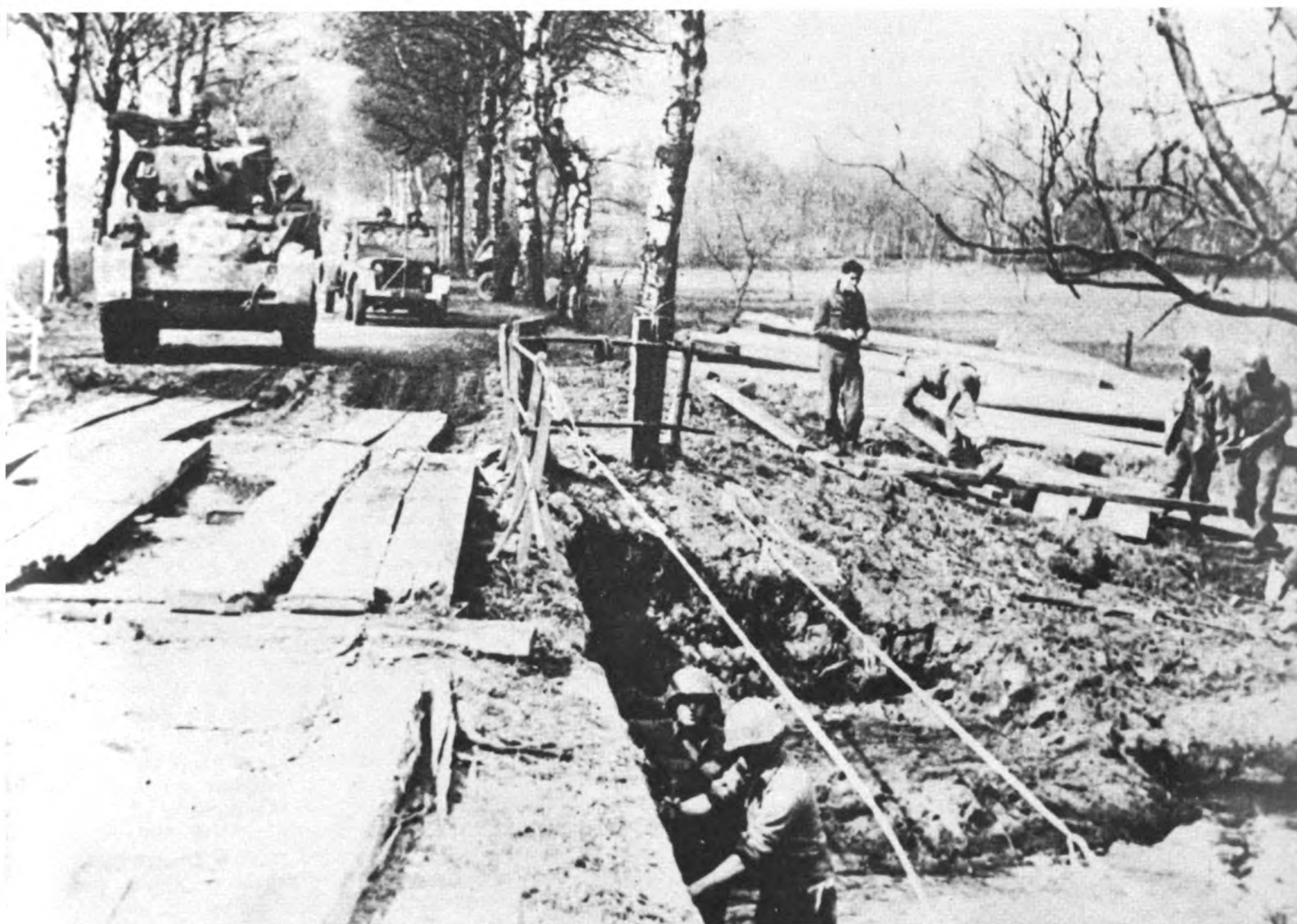
This was the first time since November that the entire Group had been in reserve.

An interesting sidelight occurred at this time. It was reported by 3rd Army that several prisoners, upon interrogation, had revealed that the units most feared by the Germans were the 3rd Cavalry "Infantry Division", the 90th Infantry Division and the 4th Armored Division. These units were all considered "Class A" troops and were greatly feared by the Germans because of their fierceness and aggressive spirit. The character of our fighting in recent weeks had borne out their statement.

The period through which we had just passed had been a particularly hard one. The troops had been operating in rough terrain, the foothills of the Hunnsruck Mountains, one

high ridge after another with the main corridors running north and south. As most of our attacks were made to the east and southeast, it meant that as soon as we had taken one bit of high ground we were immediately confronted by another ridge as high, if not higher, than the one just taken. The Germans were stubborn and took every advantage offered by the terrain. Although normally rather weak in ground troops for this operation, the enemy was well supported by artillery for which these successive ridges offered perfect observation. Everything combined to make him a stubborn foe for a small attacking force such as ours.

During this period, it was customary for the troops to secure their line of departure by setting up a strong defensive line prior to departure. When it was not possible to bring the vehicles up onto certain sections of high ground our troops dug themselves in as infantrymen and set up a perimeter defense employing all available small arms and automatic weapons. The tanks were situated close by, whenever possible, for quick support to aid in the defense and to increase the potential fire power with their vehicular armaments. The assault guns, too, were set up not far away, though normally in battery positions for close fire support. E Troop was also alerted to be committed in their primary role if the need should arise. The roads running to the rear were swept for mines by the Engineers to keep them open for the flow of vital supplies to the front line positions.



F Company on road near Trier

Trier—Riol

PART III

Our assignment to SHAEF reserve was disappointingly short. Scarcely had the vehicles been unpacked at the Feyen Barracks when word was received that the 3rd Cavalry Group was to be committed on the south flank of the XX Corps. Group was to be attached to the 65th Infantry Division. The Squadron was ordered to move to an assembly area in the vicinity of Bouzanville preparatory to further action.

20 Mar.—The morning of 20th March, the Squadron moved out for its new area. The route, through Remich, Mondorf, Thionville and Bouzanville took us through old familiar territory. There was no time for reminiscences—we had another job.

The 65th Division to which we were attached had been making good progress in their drive eastward. Resistance was light and disorganized and with this fact in mind, the CG ordered the Squadron to pass through his infantry and establish contact with the main body of the enemy.

21 Mar.—Leaving the assembly area in Bouzanville at 0530 the 21st with A Troop on the north and C on the south, the Squadron pushed forward into the Division zone. First reports from the Troops were that the towns of Schiffweiler and Wemmetsweiler were clear of enemy and were already occupied by elements of the 70th Reconnaissance Troop. From here A and C pushed on to Bildstock, Landsweiler and Gunfirchen which were also clear and occupied by various units of the 70th, 45th and 63rd Divisions. What had originally appeared as a normal mission soon degenerated into a "rat race". The Troops kept pushing forward with all possible speed but wherever they went they met only friendly Troops. After the Squadron CP had reached Neunkirchen and the reconnaissance troops had gotten to Homburg and Mittelbexbach orders were received to remain in present positions. The 3rd and 7th Armies had converged. No one knew what he or anyone else was supposed to do or where to go. Fortunately our attachment to the 65th was called off and we reverted to Corps control. It had been the easiest mission yet for the Squadron.

That night the Squadron assembled in the woods near Kashofen, a suburb of Homburg and prepared for further action. The next day the entire Group went into an assembly area near Ottweiler. The Squadron CP together with A Troop and F Company were in the city. C Troop went to Steinweiler, B to Steinbach and E in Neunkirchen. Rehabilitation of men and equipment got under way at once in preparation for another mission.

As if to compensate for our short stay in SHAEF reserve, we now had a breathing spell which lasted for nearly a week. The only assignment during this period fell to A Troop



Bridge at Oppenheim

which was sent to Kaiserlautern to take over the PW cage there which at one time during their stay contained as many as 35,000 prisoners.

25-26 Mar.—The 25th brought new orders. The following day the entire Group would move to another assembly area—this time in the vicinity of Kriegsfeld. The Squadron moved out on schedule the next morning at 0600, headed east for some 60 miles and was assembled in the new area shortly after noon. A route reconnaissance was initiated by certain key officers of the bridgehead area which the 80th Division had established in the vicinity of Kastel, just across the Rhine to the east of Mainz.

Several sets of orders were issued and retracted during the next few hours but eventually the Squadron was given the mission of protecting the bridge over the Rhine at Kastel. In addition we were to guard a new bridge which was to be erected over the Main River in the vicinity of Hochheim. Clearance had to be secured from the XII Corps to move one reconnaissance troop over the bridge to proceed to the Main where they could guard the proposed bridge site. The remainder of the Squadron would protect the Kastel bridge.

Moving to the bridgehead area, the Squadron CP was established in Mainz. All Troops located in nearby towns. Later in the day, C Troop crossed both the Rhine and the Main Rivers and eventually took up positions in the vicinity of Hocheim where they set up a series of strong points. The Troop also sent contact patrols along both the north and south banks of the Main.

29 Mar.—During the night our orders were changed again. The Squadron was relieved of the bridge-guarding mission which was assigned to B Troop. By 0500 the morning of the 29th the entire 3rd Cavalry Group had crossed the Rhine at Oppenheim and had closed in the Hochheim area. From here Group moved out in a column of Squadrons, the 3rd leading

the way in the initial stages, with the final objective of Dortweiler and Karben.

The Squadron jumped off at 1000 and by 1020 had reached and cleared its first objective without meeting any resistance. Pushing rapidly on, the second objective, Hofheim and Kriftel, was reached by 1100 still with no opposition from the enemy. At this point we held up to allow the 43rd Squadron to pass through to continue the push to the east. The Squadron CP was temporarily set up in Kriftel and was kept busy interrogating and rounding up the many prisoners sent in from the Troops.

All during the day there was no struggle put up the many Germans that were encountered. Road conditions were excellent. It was a beautiful spring day. As the Squadron rolled along through the German towns bringing freedom to hundreds of refugee laborers—Poles, Russians and French—who were thick along the highways as we passed, waving and cheering us on. White flags hung from almost every house. The Germans had so lost the spirit of resistance that they were voluntarily turning in all weapons. Both Squadrons used the super highway whenever possible and made rapid progress. There were no bridges that could not be by-passed, no mines, no road blocks, though we did find that two bridges over the Autobahn near Bonanes had been blown. The result was that by 1700 the entire Group had reached its objective with hardly a shot being fired.

Lacking further instructions the Troops stabilized their positions for the night. The Squadron CP with F Co. was set up in Bonanes in the sumptuous apartment of a large mill owner; C Troop was in Vilbel, E Troop at Niederusel, A Troop in Harheim and Kalbach. B Troop remained in the rear guarding the bridge at Kastel.

The result of the day's operations was that the 3rd Cavalry Group had swept a path from the confluence of the Main and Rhine Rivers to a point northeast of Frankfurt. We had isolated that great city and opened the Autobahn as a main supply route for Corps. Some 534 prisoners were taken during the day while there were no casualties suffered in the entire Group. Some 400 prisoners were taken in a hospital in Hofheim over whom the 3rd Squadron placed a guard until Corps could send troops to take over.

30 Mar.—The following morning, new instructions were received ordering Group to continue the attack to the north and northeast. The 3rd Squadron objective was the city of Alsfeld. It was to be reached by dark this same day and at the same time liaison was to be maintained with the 6th Armored Division operating on our right flank. If strong resistance was encountered; it would be by-passed and left for the 65th Division, following along behind, to clean up. Pushing out at 0700,

the troops again moved rapidly. Town after town was reported clear as we went ahead still without making contact with the enemy. By 1800 our objective was reached with the entire Squadron established in and around Alsfeld after an advance of some 50 miles.

Again a large bag of prisoners had been taken—a total of nearly 1,000 for the 3rd Cavalry Group, mostly stragglers who were unable to give information of any real value. Among the prisoners was a Colonel who had been Chief of Ordnance in Frankfurt. He stated that there was no real German army left and that the war would be over soon. What little was left of the army was in a general state of confusion—about all they had left were stragglers and "4 Fs."

During the night of the 30-31st, B Troop which had finally been relieved at Kastel, rejoined the Squadron at Alsfeld.

31 Mar.—Higher Headquarters was kept busy issuing new missions so rapid was our fulfillment of those assigned to us. The morning of the 31st the 3rd Squadron was ordered to renew its advance at 0700 to seize and clear the City of Heilenstadt some 75 miles northeast from Alsfeld. In addition, the Squadron was to establish a PW cage of its own in Rotenburg as prisoners were coming in too fast to be transported back to the Division cage. As the Squadron moved out in the early morning, we were reminded that we still had an enemy to reckon with—the column was strafed by an unknown number of enemy planes near the Autobahn though fortunately there were no casualties. This was the first indication that the day might bring something more than a regulation road march.

C Troop was the first to contact the enemy. It was an eight-man patrol. After a brief fire fight, in which we suffered no casualties, several of the enemy were killed and wounded. The advance then continued, until sniper fire was met, stopping to flush out the area, they rounded up thirty prisoners. Meanwhile one platoon of A Troop, attempting to push southeast from Baumbach to Braach, was fired on by self-propelled guns located on the north bank of the Fulda River. One armored car and crew were lost. Despite heavy fire from the other side of the river, the whole Squadron pushed on close to the Fulda. Reconnoitering for bridges, it was found that the enemy had blown them all and that there were no fords. A more detailed reconnaissance unearthed one small bridge at Rotenburg which was still intact and another one north of Braach which was prepared for demolition. Our troops were able to prevent the enemy from blowing the bridge by continually harassing them with small arms fire. Later the location of a ford in that area was obtained from a Polish civilian picked up in Braach. Upon investigation of the ford the river was found to be about twenty feet wide and four deep.



Typical German town showing ravages of war

As evidenced both by PW reports and by experience, it was obvious that Bebra and Rotenburg were enemy strongpoints. One platoon from C Troop was sent to flank Rotenburg from the west. As they advanced toward Beenhausen they were fired on by Bazookas manned by an unknown number of infantry. One armored car was hit and knocked out. The platoon leader, Lt. Wood, was killed. After a fierce fire fight, the enemy dispersed into the woods and the platoon continued on its mission. On the road between Beenhausen and Rotenburg, they encountered a road block for which there was no bypass and the platoon was obliged to turn back. An OP, set up west of Rotenburg, observed three SP guns and an unknown number of infantry in the city. They also saw 20 tanks and SP guns north of the city near Heinenbach. Many of the infantry were armed with bazookas and it was one of the first indications that the enemy intended to employ this weapon on a much larger scale than heretofore.

Forward progress was temporarily halted along the Fulda River. By nightfall all troops were disposed along this line prepared to develop this situation the following day.

The experience of the 43rd Squadron was similar to that of the 3rd. Their forward progress had likewise been halted along the Fulda. Here the enemy had apparently established a strong delaying position employing as many anti-tank and self-propelled weapons as possible. The river with its bridges blown, road blocks defended by AT fire, tanks, SP guns, anti-tank barriers and infantry armed with bazookas formed a formidable line of resistance along the river. An extension of the same line had halted the advances of the 4th Armored on our right and the 6th Armored on our left.

April—After having advanced some 150 miles during the last three days of March, the first day of April was a definite contrast. Progress temporarily halted by the enemy main line of resistance along the Fulda River; the

Squadron spent the day in an effort to further develop the situation in preparation for the 65th Infantry Division which was to pass through us and attempt to destroy enemy resistance.

Following the normal pattern, the Germans had not withdrawn from all the towns on our side of the river so it was planned to clear all towns on the west bank.

During the night 31 March-1 April, the enemy tried to run a sneak patrol of 12 men into Braach. They were armed with bazookas and their apparent mission was to destroy our tanks. A Troop was alert and before any damage could be done two enemy were killed and the rest fled to the east—back across the river.

1 Apr.—A report was received that the civilians in Rotenburg wanted to declare themselves an "Open City" but that a General, together with some 300 SS soldiers in the city, was preventing it. The report further stated that all other troops had withdrawn east to Eschwege. One platoon from C Troop was sent to investigate. Starting from Beenhausen, they first encountered an undefended road block



"Kaput"

which was easily by-passed though a five-man patrol was seen nearby which fled in haste when our troops opened fire. Continuing on they entered the town of Wusterfeld which was found to be clear. Just beyond the town, however, they encountered several flak guns and four bazooka teams. Two enemy tanks were also observed nearby. They engaged our platoon in a fire fight in which C Troop lost another armored car and a bantam. After inflicting casualties on the enemy, the platoon fell back to Wusterfeld where they received orders to hold the town while other approaches to Rotenburg were investigated. Meanwhile another bridge had been discovered near Konnelfeld. It was still intact and though of limited capacity, it might prove very useful to the infantry. E Troop had been busy firing on groups of enemy and enemy vehicles east of the river. They destroyed two enemy

half-tracks and inflicted a substantial number of casualties—out of one enemy group of 15, 14 were killed by our assault guns.

At the end of the day Squadron positions were: Squadron CP, E Troop (-) and F Company at Sterkelhausen; A Troop (-) in Baumbach; B Troop (-) at Ersrode; C Troop (-) in Beenhäusen; platoons of E Troop in Neunorschen, Niederellenbach and Konnefeld; other Squadron elements in Braach and Wusterfeld. The rear echelon moved up to Alsfeld.

While most of the prisoners taken during the day were stragglers with little information of value, it was learned that elements of the 5th Paratroop Division and of the 6th SS Mountain Division were opposing us.

During the night of the 1-2 April, the 65th Division closed in an assembly area just behind our forward positions preparatory to attacking across the river with two regimental combat teams in the early morning.

2 Apr.—In the morning several prisoners picked up earlier stated that the SS Troops had withdrawn from Rotenburg. This was confirmed by a statement from an enemy policeman picked up in Braach. A Troop sent one reconnaissance platoon to investigate. They found the city clear of enemy and immediately occupied it. In and around Rotenburg they found eight heavy flak guns which they demolished. They also found that there had been a large allied PW camp there. All prisoners with the exception of two British officers had been evacuated. The British officers said the Germans had pulled out under cover of darkness, retreating east and had blown the bridge over the Fulda.

Meanwhile the 6th and 4th Armored Divisions, on our left and right respectively, had resumed their attacks. They had succeeded in breaking through the enemy defensive line along the river and by so-doing had completely outflanked the positions opposing us. The enemy, with the exception of a few small but fanatical groups had been obliged to withdraw.

About noon orders were received to cease all aggressive action and to remain in present positions awaiting a new mission. We were to be relieved by the 6th Cavalry Group. The Squadron began to assemble in Rotenburg as soon as the Troops were uncovered by the attack of the 65th which was progressing rapidly. As numerous reports of ambushes behind the lines had been received from nearby units, the rest of the day was spent in mopping up our rear areas. This was necessary in order that the main supply dumps and supply routes would not be molested. As a result of this clean-up a substantial number of prisoners were picked up, many of them only a short distance from the towns occupied by our troops.

Late that night, the Squadron received orders to move to an assembly area in the

vicinity of Zennern and to push to the line Ehlen-Altenritte by dark the following day. In addition we were to maintain liaison with the 80th Division on the right and elements of the V Corps on the left.

3 Apr.—At 0800 the Squadron moved again headed for Sand prepared for immediate action. On arrival in the assembly area, it was found that elements of the V Corps, the 102nd Cavalry, were already there. The Squadron was, therefore, ordered to establish a blocking line along the line Ehlen-Breitenbach-Hoof-Elgerhausen-Altenritte and to maintain contact with both flank elements. As the troops moved out, reports were soon received that Elgerhausen and Hoof were already clear. C Troop relieved elements of the 80th Division in Ehlen. B Troop went on to Altenritte which was also found clear and near which they also contacted units of the 80th. A Troop had similar experiences in Breitenbach and Martinshagen. The only semblance of enemy contact during the day was a report that the road between Ehlen and Dornberg had been cut by enemy anti-tank fire. C Troop investigated and reported the road clear. By the end of the day, the Squadron mission had been fulfilled—the troops occupied an eight-mile line as ordered and had contact with both flank units. Though there was no contact with enemy ground troops during the day, their planes had been active—the troops in Breitenbach were strafed but suffered no casualties.

4 Apr.—Starting again at 0800 the following morning, the Squadron moved with the mission of clearing one of the main roads into the large city of Kassel. Each Reconnaissance Troop was assigned a separate sector, A on the left, C in the middle and B on the right. A Troop quickly cleared its area where it met elements of the 9th Armored. C Troop also moved rapidly and soon reached the town of Kalden, astride the main road to Kassel, where they completely surprised some forty Germans who were captured without a shot being fired. C Troop then turned to help B Troop by working toward Obervellmar but found a road block for which there was no bypass. B Troop meanwhile operating in the sector nearest Kassel was having trouble. First they had encountered a road block which was finally by-passed only to run into enemy infantry. At the same time they began to receive the direct fire of 88s from the vicinity of Obervellmar. It appeared that the enemy had decided to fight a delaying action in this area.

Further reconnaissance revealed that Obervellmar was defended by several road blocks and anti-tank guns while the nearby town of Heckerhausen was guarded by at least 12 dual purpose 88 mm guns and some 100 infantrymen. They were using the railroad station as a strong point. Their guns were well dug in but as they were originally part of the air defenses of Kassel their situation

was such that they were vulnerable to our artillery which by nightfall had accounted for most of them together with their crews. Late in the afternoon Lt. Courtwright's platoon caught a group of some 30 infantrymen in the open southwest of Obervellmar. The group was promptly liquidated to a man. It was too late in the day to attempt an all-out attack on the two towns so B Troop pulled up for the night and made plans to flank these positions the next day. This proved to be unnecessary as the enemy largely withdrew during the night.

5 Apr.—B Troop sent a patrol in the morning to investigate reports that the enemy had withdrawn from the immediate area. They found Heckerhausen and Monchehof clear but a patrol from C Troop checking Obervellmar found a different situation. As they entered the town they received small arms fire from several truckloads of enemy who had tarried too long over their morning coffee before getting under way. A short fire fight took place in which they took 25 prisoners, wounded 30 and killed about 35. We took over the town without casualties to our troops.

Reports were now coming in of the appearance of 1st Army units in the Squadron zone. Consequently orders were issued by higher headquarters to remain in present positions until such time as the situation could be clarified.

6 Apr.—The entire 3rd Cavalry Group plus attachments of Engineers, Field Artillery and Tank Destroyers moved to a new assembly area generally south of Kassel with orders to start rehabilitation and maintenance. No new mission appeared imminent. Upon completion of the move the Squadron Headquarters was set up in Korle with C and E Troops; A Troop in Albehausen and C and B in Walderode. The rear echelon moved nearby to Guxhagen.

7 Apr.—Late in the day XX Corps ordered the 3rd Cavalry Group to relieve the 417th Infantry between Wiltzenhausen and Bad Soden on the west side of the Werra River. Corps was attacking eastward towards Erfurt and Weimar employing the 76th and 80th Divisions initially but with Armor to pass through to exploit any break-through. The new Group mission was given to the 43rd Squadron which had been in reserve for several days. The 3rd Squadron was instructed to assemble near Gros Almerode and to prepare for further action.

The next afternoon our temporary rest period was ended by the receipt of orders to relieve the 385th Regiment. The Infantry was in position facing north, on the east of the Werra River, between Allendorf and Wilbich, a front of some nine miles. We were given the additional mission of cleaning up a reported enemy pocket, some 15 miles wide and five miles deep. The Squadron with a platoon

of Engineers and another of TDs was to move early the next morning to the east side of the river and to arrive at the Niederhone Bridge by 0715. As soon as the Infantry had been relieved the Squadron was to clear the Corps zone to the north boundary and to continue to protect the north flank.

9 Apr.—The three reconnaissance Troops of the Squadron moved out on schedule the morning of the 9th with C on the left, B in the center and A on the right. At first the troops encountered numerous road blocks, blown bridges and other obstacles that made progress slow. However, none of the obstacles were defended nor was there any direct contact with the enemy. Cooperating with the 43rd Squadron as well as a task force from the 6th Armored Division the entire zone was cleared by nightfall. All roads leading from the north into the Corps sector were blocked with armored cars from the reconnaissance Troops supported by Engineers and TDs, altogether an excellent mobile defense.

10 Apr.—Our portion of the north flank was soon uncovered by the advance of the 6th armored so we were ordered to assemble a few miles northeast of Gotha on the next day. During the move to the new area the Squadron column was strafed near Schonstadt by 3 FW 190s which dropped a number of small anti-personnel bombs. One man was fatally wounded while one officer and three men were injured.

Corps next ordered the Squadron to again protect their left flank. The 76th and 80th Divisions had broken through and were advancing rapidly to the east against disorganized enemy resistance. The Squadron was to maintain liaison with the 76th and with the 9th Armored of the V Corps on our north flank. Our job was to keep abreast of the Infantry's leading elements and at the same time we were not to block the two main routes of the advance as it was planned to send the 6th Armored through the Infantry the next day.

On the night of the 10th of April B Troop moved out to initiate the new mission and soon had contact with elements of the 86th Reconnaissance Squadron. By morning the relief had been completed. As the left flank of Corps was gradually uncovered the Squadron moved forward leapfrogging the troops forward to keep up with the Infantry. Soon the 6th advanced and passed through the 76th which brought orders for the Squadron to maintain liaison between the rear elements of the 6th and the advanced elements of the 76th. In a fluid situation such as this, it often happened that Corps would lose contact with the rapidly advancing units so it became our job through the use of several liaison officers operating with the adjacent units to relay the latest information on back to Corps where it could be properly correlated and evaluated. This, of course, was in addition to our primary

mission of furnishing protection on the Corps flank.

11 Apr.—By dark on the 11th, the Squadron was stretched along some 21 miles of the north flank. The Squadron CP was in Sommerada with the troops spread in a general line east and west through this point. It was during this day that A Troop reported that it had captured a Japanese legation. Higher Headquarters showed a keen interest in the report and at their suggestion a further investigation was made which revealed that the important members had fled prior to our arrival, leaving behind only the German wife of a minor Japanese official together with numerous children.

12 Apr.—During the 12th the troops again followed the north boundary of Corps pushing east as they were uncovered by the Armor and the Infantry. The 6th was meeting no opposition as they swept through central Germany and we ourselves had still made no contact with the enemy. By the end of the day, the Squadron Headquarters had moved east to Osterfeld with all troops in that general area but stretched thin with a coverage of some 14 miles.

Since the start of the present mission the two Squadrons combined (the 43rd had the same mission on the south flank of Corps) had picked up more than 900 prisoners, but they were all stragglers and had no information of military value. We had moved about 110 miles eastward in three days and were now nearing the Czechoslovakian border.

During the day's operations on the 12th, the Squadron captured a hospital in Flemming which contained approximately 1800 wounded German soldiers. The hospital was immediately placed under guard.

13 Apr.—On the 13th the Armor continued its advance but was delayed by an unusual number of road blocks. In addition artillery and flak was becoming more noticeable. One of our troops reconnoitering for a bridge over the Weisse River received particularly heavy fire from German flak guns. We also encountered a considerable number of enemy infantry with machine guns and several 88 mm AA guns. Later more were encountered dug in just south of Grana.

Where we had been advancing from 50-60 miles each day, progress had been limited to between 15 and 20 on this day. It did, however, bring Squadron Headquarters to Osterfeld.

14 Apr.—The next day the 14th brought a change in orders as far as we were concerned. The mission on the north flank was completed and the Squadron moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Hermesdorf where it closed late in the afternoon there to await further orders.

15 Apr.—New orders were not long in coming. At midnight the 14-15 April the Squadron moved to occupy positions along the south flank of Corps, in Stadroda-Ouirala-Horsdorf area. We were to maintain contact with the 353rd Infantry on the south and 43rd Squadron on the right. The troops encountered no opposition while moving into position. The autobahn ran just north of these positions and was to be the main supply route for the XX Corps as it drove east.

By noon of the 15th our new positions were completely uncovered by the advancing Infantry. We again assembled in position to await further instructions.

The large picture was good. Erfurt, Weimar and Jena had all capitulated to the attack of the XX Corps. On the north the V Corps had kept pace and was now attacking Leipzig. Both the 4th and 6th Armored Divisions had established bridgeheads over the Mulde River in the face of the first real resistance encountered in some time. Chemnitz which lay directly to the east some 30 miles in front of the Corps had been issued an ultimatum from General Walker—surrender in 24 hours or take the consequences of a coordinated attack by the entire Corps.

At 1340 on the 15th the Squadron was ordered to dispose to the east to new positions along the south flank beyond the 43rd Squadron. In general they were between Crimnitzschau, which was in the process of being cleared by the 80th Division and Schlunzig near the Mulde River. A Troop moved first and soon occupied Crimnitzschau; B Troop followed going east of A and then C Troop which shortly established contact with the 4th Armored Division near Wernsdorf. The Squadron CP moved to Meerane.

16 Apr.—In the morning the Squadron continued on its mission. C Troop sent a patrol to investigate the town of Mosel where they were fired on by Panzerfausts and machine guns. They found two log road blocks in the east end of the town. However, as the town was in the VIII Corps zone, the patrol withdrew without casualty. Later the assault guns shelled the town with white phosphorus.

At the end of the day the Squadron CP was still located in Meerane though the Troops had moved slightly. A Troop in Kirchen, and Rudelswalde; B Troop at Gablenz, C and E in the neighborhood of Schlunzig, F Company in Rudelswalde.

17 Apr.—The next day Group received orders to continue our mission only until we were completely uncovered. We were then to assemble and await further orders as the Corps advance was to be halted. There was to be a general shake-up in Corps and Army boundaries and it was impossible to foresee the outcome.



Autobahn near Hermesdorf — Cavalry going east—Prisoners west

Southeast to Austria

PART IV

(SOUTH TO AUSTRIA)

As the enemy retreated to the east, it appeared that he was concentrating his fanatical SS Troops in the "National Redoubt" and that they planned to make their last stand in the mountain stronghold probably using Berchtesgaden as their headquarters. Apparently the 3rd Army was to be shifted south to attack these positions from the northwest and the XX Corps would be assigned a zone near Nurnberg. Our present positions were to be taken over by the 1st Army.

19 Apr.—The large scale shifting of troops necessitated by the new sectors tied up all roads for several days and it was not until the 19th that Squadron could get road clearance. Movement was started at noon, heading west along the Autobahn as far as Erfurt where we turned south through Arnstadt. Heavy traffic was encountered all along the route. The entire Squadron did not close in the new assembly area at Lichtenfels until late that night.

20 Apr.—After only a few short hours of sleep, Squadron was ordered to move to the north flank of Corps to screen the advance east as far as Creussen. As the Squadron moved out we were notified that the mission of the entire Group had been changed. Group was to advance ahead of the Corps to the Danube River and to seize all bridges in the Corps Zone. The Squadron then moved to an initial assembly area in the vicinity of Kirchenthumbach and on the following day to a forward assembly area near Hersbruck prepared to pass through the 71st Division.

For the new mission Corps attached two companies of the 811 TD Battalion; A Company of the 245th Engineer Battalion and the entire 5th Ranger Battalion. The 274th Field Artillery was to be in direct support. The attachments were divided equally between the two Squadrons.

The Corps mission was to attack southeast and to contact the Russian forces advancing west from Vienna. The general plan for the Group was to pass through the 65th and 71st Divisions at 0600, 22 April and reconnoitre southeast by-passing isolated spots of enemy resistance and to advance as rapidly as possible to seize any bridge across the Danube.

The 3rd Squadron was to pass through the 71st, to attack in two columns with the bulk of the Squadron strength towards the center of the Group zone. A secondary mission was to seize and hold all bridges across the Naab River which ran through our sector. The 43rd had the same mission on our right flank though the Naab did not touch their area. Full loads of gas were carried plus rations for three days. The rear echelon was to



Knocked out German Tank on way to Austria



German Plane near Hersbruck



Sq. deployed in Field near Creussen



TDs rolling through a German town



Sq. Maintenance at Burglengelfeld

remain behind as were the Troop kitchens and baggage vehicles. The boundary between the two Squadrons was the line of the Vila River which flowed southeast through the Corps sector. The entire Group was to operate the width of the Corps zone, a front of about 18 miles.

22 Apr.—At 0600 the morning of the 22nd of April the entire group moved out and passed through the forward elements of the two infantry divisions. The weather, which had at first been bright and sunny, changed suddenly bringing rain, hail, sleet and snow. The roads were bad forcing us to abandon the roads frequently and take off across the fields, through deep mud. While the maps had shown a fair road net, some of these did not even exist on the ground. The terrain was rough and rugged. Progress was slow as a result and it took several hours to even get ahead of the infantry.

At first only scattered enemy were seen who fled into the woods as we approached. By 1400 the first phase line which ran through Hohenburg had been reached by the 3rd Squadron. Here enemy resistance consisting of small arms and light machine gun fire was encountered. There were also numerous undefended road blocks which for the most part were either quickly by-passed or demolished by the Engineers. Prisoners were being picked up singly and in small groups and their evacuation was already becoming a problem. During the afternoon B Troop moved into the small town of Mettsdorf. Just as they reached the bridge here they saw an enemy soldier jump on a motor cycle and dash away but one particularly alert trooper opened fire and threw the rider when he hit the rear tire. He was immediately pinned down by fire from other weapons while several members of the troop dashed across the bridge to take him prisoner. Interrogation of the prisoner revealed that he had the job of getting to Burglengelfeld as fast as possible as soon as our troops appeared to give them time to blow their bridge. He also said that enemy artillery had just pulled out of Mettsdorf and was racing to get across the Burglengelfeld bridge ahead of us. At this, the leading elements of the Troop, consisting of the 1st Platoon, the 2nd Platoon of F Company with E Company of the 5th Rangers riding on the decks of the tanks, took off in hot pursuit. They soon caught the enemy artillery all of which was either captured or destroyed. They then raced on to Burglengelfeld. Here they found the enemy waiting on the bridge for the artillery to cross before they blew the bridge. The enemy was completely taken by surprise and before they could fire a shot, B Troop had raced across the bridge, captured those on the bridge and deployed through the town. The Rangers immediately took over the high ground there and secured the southern end of the bridge

while the Engineers neutralized all demolitions on the bridge doing so under sniper fire from isolated groups of enemy who had not yet been rounded up.

Approximately 400 PWs were taken here. The bridge itself was a two-way stone structure strong enough to support an army load. The capture of the bridge was promptly reported to higher headquarters who informed us that a battalion of motorized infantry from the 71st would be sent to relieve the 3rd Squadron on the bridge to guard it against possible enemy action. Meanwhile the Squadron was rushing all troops possible to secure the bridge and establish a bridgehead. By dark most of the Squadron, except for part of C Troop and F Company which were stuck in heavy mud in the woods near Winbuch, had closed in the bridgehead area.

The Squadron remained in the vicinity of Burglengenfeld for the night outposting several small towns in the bridgehead. There was no enemy activity except for picking up enemy stragglers. In billeting for the night, many German soldiers were roused from their sleep, unaware that there were Americans in town and were taken under guard while their captors took their places in warm beds.

23 Apr.—It was not until afternoon of the 23rd that the Infantry finally appeared at Burglengenfeld and allowed the Squadron to proceed once more on its mission. Immediately after the relief, A and B Troops moved out to attempt to reach the final objective. A Troop reached the town of Pirkunsee and reported it clear. Richlberg was also reported clear at 1715 as were Kunn and Eithbrunn. No organized resistance had been encountered and only small groups offered opposition which consisted mainly of small arms fire. B Troop moved into Regenstaufer and found the bridge over the Naab River had been blown. Civilians encountered along the route of advance stated that all bridges over the Danube had been blown but reports from some of the prisoners indicated that as of the 22nd, several bridges were still intact. A Troop received heavy 88 mm fire as it entered Hainsacker which they believed came from a battery of at least four guns located east of the Regen River. Still pushing on, A Troop next encountered a defended road block at Kareth. At the same time they were receiving such heavy fire from the southern defenders of Regensburg that they were forced to pull back into Hainsacker. The Troop suffered three casualties during this action and one bantam was lost, knocked out by bazooka fire. Some fifty rounds of heavy calibre artillery fell in Hainsacker during the night killing one of the Rangers while two others were wounded by sniper fire from the woods near the town.

In the meantime, those elements of C Troop and F Co. which had been stuck in the mire, had freed themselves and were hur-

rying to catch up with the rest of the Squadron. As they were approaching Burglengenfeld, early in the afternoon they encountered an enemy half-track. Two Germans were killed and one wounded in the short fight that followed. This encounter occurred some distance behind the front lines and further illustrated the fact that our fluid attack had left many enemy pockets well to the rear to be cleared up by the Infantry.

24 Apr.—At approximately 0700 A and B Troops renewed the attack, moving out to reconnoiter along the Danube. At 0740 B Troop reported that Irnhau, Kallmunz and Trischberg were all clear but that they had overrun a large hospital in Kallmunz where they had taken a substantial number of prisoners. Both Troops were still running into road-blocks but again they were easily reduced. By 1030 Harlhausen and Balern were also cleared. C Troop, moving with Squadron Headquarters, ran into an electric mine field though no casualties resulted.

B Troop operating west of A, aggressively pushed southward making every effort to reach the Danube. After having cleared several towns along the route, the Troop was ordered to turn and attack Eiterzhausen which was located near the confluence of the Naab River and the Danube, where it was hoped that they might be able to capture a bridge. At the time it was not known definitely whether or not the enemy had yet blown all the bridges. As they approached the town, it was reported that it had been blown.

At 1315 B Troop entered the town of Kneiting which was located on the Danube. This was the first unit out of the XX Corps to reach the Corps objective. Meanwhile A Troop had not only pushed back into Kareth but had also driven on beyond as far as Winzer by late afternoon and thus became the second unit to reach the Danube.

A reconnaissance of the river line revealed that the enemy had blown all bridges. Consequently all Troops stabilized for the night pending the arrival of the Infantry. The Squadron CP moved to Schwaighausen for the night while A was at Winzer and Meider, B and F at Pettendorf and C at Hainsacker.

The Squadron mission had been successfully completed. Although the enemy had managed to blow all bridges, we had reached the river in several places and had cleared the main roads leading to it. During this operation, the 3rd Cavalry Group had taken more than two thousand prisoners and in addition had inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. We had disorganized the Germans to the point where they were incapable of making any real stand north of the Danube River line which was, of course essential if they were to hold the city of Regensburg. The stage had been set for the assault on Regensburg and

for further advances preliminary to the final assault on the National Redoubt.

It is interesting to note in passing, the composition of the Task Force. To each of the Reconnaissance Troops was attached certain units from the Rangers, TDs and Engineers. In this manner each Troop became a small scale task force in its own right. Each had tremendous striking power and was capable of operating independently deep within enemy territory. The Rangers were normally mounted in the following manner: one man was on the 50 cal. machine gun on the light tanks and TDs, two more placed themselves on either side of the turret armed with BARs, two more rode on the tail with M-Is and still another rode the deck with a Tommy-gun. Whenever they encountered a road block, the light tanks would first approach and cover it with fire. Then the Rangers would dismount and advance on the block under the protection of the vehicular weapons where they would in turn protect the Engineers as they moved up to reduce the block.

Whenever one of these miniature task forces met a defended town, they would first develop the surrounding terrain employing the reconnaissance platoons. The tanks and TDs would then advance within range firing HE and smoke. Their fire would either seriously damage or set fire to whatever buildings were hit. The tanks would then assault the town with the TDs following close behind. Rangers rode the decks of the TDs. All weapons, large and small, maintained a steady chatter of fire. As soon as a breakthrough had been made into the town the Rangers would dismount and mop up whatever opposition remained.

Corps had planned for us to continue on under a somewhat different mission. We were scheduled to protect both flanks as soon as the Infantry could move up to relieve us. The 56th and 71st Divisions were to assault and capture Regensburg. The 13th Armored Division would then pass through and attack to the southeast, ultimately to link-up with the Russians who were already headed up the Danube valley after having taken the city of Vienna.

25 Apr.—The 3rd Squadron was ordered to protect the right or south flank of XX Corps. Insofar as possible we were to seize any or all bridges over the Danube near Straubing. We were to prepare to cross the river on the 71st Division bridge, as soon as it was installed, at Sulzbach. These orders were subsequently amended as the possibility of taking a bridge intact was very remote. As it eventually turned out, our only mission was to cover the right flank of Corps.

This same day all Troops were relieved by the doughboys. At 1130 the relief had been completed and the Squadron moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Brennborg in



Armored car stuck in the mud

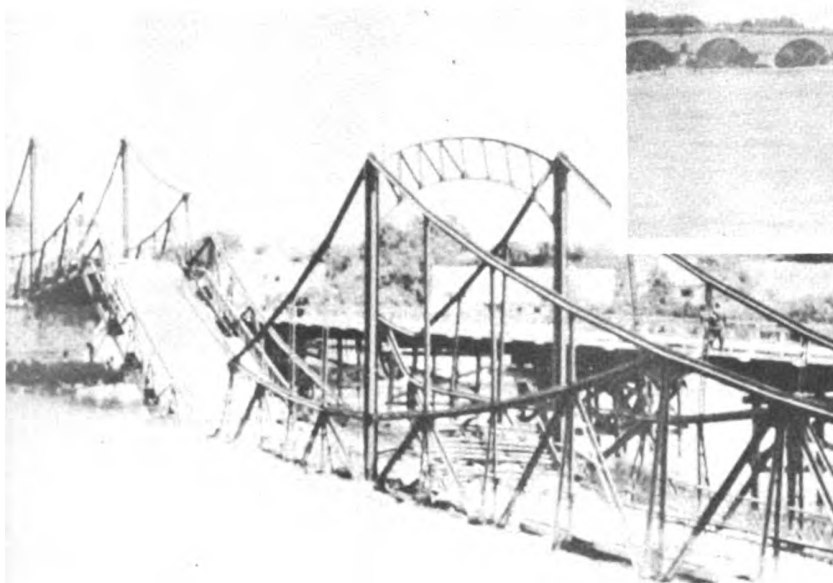
anticipation of the new mission. Shortly after closing in this area, however, all Troops were ordered to move again to clear the territory surrounding Nitteau and Straubing. As our units deployed little enemy opposition was encountered.

26 Apr.—During the night of the 25-26th German activity was negligible. Early in the morning B Troop was sent to reconnoiter southeast along the Danube as far as Straubing. The city was reached by noon that day without contact with the enemy. Apparently they had withdrawn across the river. As originally anticipated, it was discovered that all bridges had been demolished. A patrol was dispatched to check for bridging materials, barges and ferry sites.

C Troop had also moved out to reconnoiter but found road conditions so bad that their progress was extremely slow. Despite these handicaps they were, by 1300, well along having progressed as far as Hofdorf which was situated on the Danube. They encountered only slight enemy resistance consisting primarily of small arms fire from the numerous stragglers who lurked along the roads. At 1430 a group of 15 Germans was spotted. They were armed with three .42 machine guns. C Troop promptly opened up with mortars, machine guns and 37s. The opposition was quickly dispersed.

Somewhat later in the day, B Troop found three large barges marked with Red Cross flags in the Danube not far from Bach. Barges and crews were seized without serious opposition. Further investigation revealed that they were all loaded with 500 lb. aerial bombs charged with poisonous gas. According to captured crew members, the bombs had originally been scheduled for delivery to the air-

Bridges destroyed by the Germans at
Regensburg





The Danube near Regensburg



Part of our task force moving toward the Danube



Brenberg



Treadway Bridge over the Danube at Regensburg

field at Regensburg. Original instructions to the crews were that the barges should be blown if capture by Allied troops was imminent. These orders had been canceled, however, two days before our arrival. Now the barges were to be abandoned. According to the prisoners the Red Cross markings had been displayed to prevent bombing or shelling. The PWs further stated that even if the boats were sunk, the bombs would still be subject to detonation if a nearby explosion occurred. B Troop placed a guard on the barges and reported their capture to higher headquarters.

A Troop moved into Kiefenholz from which point the 71st Division had reported receiving fire. The Troop cleared the town taking some 40 prisoners. That night a small enemy force, which had remained hidden during the day, attempted to escape south across the river in the vicinity of Neiderachdorf but were thwarted by the alert guards from E Troop who opened up with all available weapons.

27 Apr.—Squadron received orders to cross the Danube behind CCB of the 13th Armored Division. We were to be prepared either to protect the north flank of Corps or to maintain contact between the south flank of the 71st Division and forward elements of the 80th Division.

The city of Regensburg capitulated on this day without a struggle despite the fact that there had been persistent rumors that the city would be defended to the "last bullet". The Infantry continued the Corps' attack against light opposition though considerably hampered by freak weather which turned the entire countryside into a sea of mud. It was planned that the 13th Armored would start to move across the river the next day and continue the attack to the southeast.

28 Apr.—At 0930 the Squadron commenced moving towards the Sulzbach bridge. So heavy was the traffic attempting to cross on this bridge that it was not until late in the afternoon that we finally established our priority and pushed our way onto the bridge. From the bridge movement was made to the right flank of the 71st. By nightfall the Squadron CP was established in Sunching. The Troops were dispersed in nearby towns.

29 Apr.—The mission was continued—we were still protecting the flank. We occupied the towns of Hainsbach and Puchhausen as part of our screen. Later in the day higher headquarters decided that E Troop could handle the Squadron mission and that the rest of the Squadron should assemble and await new orders.

30 Apr.—No change in orders was forthcoming. All Troops were assembled in the neighborhood of Sunching resting and cleaning equipment.

Statistics for the month of April are in-

teresting. Our casualties had been extremely light: one man had been killed and one officer and 15 men wounded. During this same period we had exacted a heavy toll from the enemy—we had killed 75, wounded 65 more and taken almost five thousand prisoners.

May 1945—The first of May found the Squadron near the Austrian frontier expecting orders momentarily which would send us on a new mission. The Squadron CP was still located at Sunching. A Troop was at Alteglofsheim, B Troop in Geishering and C in Haidenkofen. E Troop and F Company were with the Squadron CP.

During the day it was reported that Kreuther Forest as well as several other nearby towns were being used by enemy troops as a concentration point; that there were tanks, self-propelled guns and heavy artillery in this area plus about two thousand troops. As these woods were well to the rear of Squadron, Corps issued orders that they would be cleaned up. B Troop took off at 1350 on this errand but encountered no enemy opposition despite a thorough search of the region. The only Germans they found were the usual stragglers who willingly surrendered. The Troop returned at 1900.

2 May—The Squadron moved to a new area in the vicinity of Essenbach and Altheim prepared to cross the Isar River. It was not until the following day, however, that the crossing was actually made at Landshut. The Squadron then assembled near Mitterskirchen.

At this time XX Corps was attacking to the southeast with three divisions in line: the 65th, the 71st and the 80th. The 13th Armored was assembled in the rear. Corps was moving to contact the Russians. The link-up was expected to occur along the Enns River. It was planned that the 3rd Cavalry Group would cross the Inn River at Braunau (Hitler's birthplace) directly behind the 80th Division and would then move out to protect the south flank of Corps. As soon as the 3rd Squadron had cleared the river, it would pass through the 80th and establish a blocking line from the river southeast as far as Strasswalchen.

4 May—At 0700 the Squadron moved out for Ehring—a late change had ordered us to cross at that point instead of at Braunau—but while we were under way another change was received which instructed us to cross as originally planned. When the bridge site was finally reached it was found that it had not been completed though the Engineers had been working hard on it all the previous night. At 0930 we started to cross, however, with no interference from the enemy.

A Troop was first over the bridge and was followed by Squadron Headquarters. Positions were immediately taken up along the southern boundary of Corps employing the main road down through Burg, Kirchen and Mattighofen to reach Strasswalchen. No resistance was en-



Rcn. Platoon on road near Mattighofen

countered and by 1500 the entire Squadron was in position.

We had scarcely reached our destination when another change in orders was received. At 1540 the 43rd Squadron came up to relieve us. We were now to precede the advance of the 80th Division in the direction of the Enns River and attempt to contact the Russians.

The 80th Division had been pushing forward with terrific speed for they were meeting no resistance. The only factor which tended to retard their progress was the unbelievable number of German and Hungarian soldiers who were surrendering along the highways.

Embarked on its new mission, units of the Squadron moved along freely until a determined enemy strong point was encountered in the vicinity of Vocklabruck. Here there was a group of some fifty Hungarian SS troopers who were fanatically defending from strong positions armed with machine guns and bazookas. The reconnaissance troops attempted to by-pass this group only to find that no way was open. It was therefore necessary for us to develop the line. At 2140 an attack was made on these fanatics. Coordinating with a platoon of infantry from the 317th Regiment enemy resistance was quickly broken and the city of Vocklabruck captured. Here, over the Agar River, we found a bridge which was still intact. From this point the attack continued on to Kammer where another good bridge was captured. It was now late in the evening so the Troops disposed for the night. The Squadron CP was established in Timelkam with all Troops in position not far away.

Our advance during the day had been unusually swift. A great number of prisoners had been taken who had readily surrendered though well armed and supplied with ample

ammunition. Progress along the roads had been considerably hampered by large groups of both Germans and Hungarians as they shuffled along towards the rear, happy that the war was over for them but also disgusted that no one would stop to give them a ride.

The end of the war was obviously near and it was with high spirits that the Squadron jumped off the next morning to again lead the way for the 80th Division. No organized resistance was encountered but the precaution was taken to drop off groups to block the main roads feeding in to our supply line from the south. The advance continued to the Enns River using the highway running through Rutzmoos, Kircham and Steyr. At one point a few miles west of Steyr forward elements of the Squadron passed between columns of heavily armed SS troops moving along both sides of the road. The Germans were instructed to lay down their weapons because, as far as they were concerned, the war was over. The enemy non-coms, however, told their men to keep their guns. Though their numbers were overwhelming as compared to the size of our force they made no attempt to halt our progress. The Squadron continued on its way leaving the job of attending to the horde of prisoners to the Infantry.

The reconnaissance troops pushed on into Steyr where two thousand prisoners were rounded up and where another bridge was found still intact. Leading elements of the 80th Division reached the city not long after this and both Infantry and Cavalry concentrated on holding the bridge and in sending patrols across the river in an attempt to establish contact with the Russians. This was the spot where the link-up was supposed to occur. We had reached our objective.

One patrol, under Lt. McCreary, crossed the river and advanced as far as Steinbach where they encountered a number of enemy who were dug-in. The Germans opened fire and in the fight that ensued our patrol killed several and took three prisoners. The patrol then withdrew to Steyr.

6 May—On this day we received another mission. The 3rd Cavalry Group had been given a sector roughly 30 miles wide and 20 miles deep to clear of all enemy. This area contained the two lakes which we got to know so well in the weeks that followed—Kammer See and Traum See. The 3rd Squadron was assigned the right half of this zone and encountered no resistance as it moved in. At noon A Troop entered the town of Ebensee and reported that there was a large concentration camp nearby. Further investigation revealed that this camp contained 16,000 starving political prisoners. Conditions in the camp were found to be deplorable beyond belief. As many as 300 had been dying of starvation each day. Abuse and disease were rampant. The prisoners lived in the vilest filth imagin-

able. The stench from the camp was nauseating. Many of them had been reduced to the point of eating their own dead. The camp was in the same class as those more notorious ones at Belsen, Buchenwald and Ordruf. Immediate steps were taken to alleviate the condition of the unfortunates. Food and medical aid were requisitioned. Pending arrival of these supplies the troops did everything that was humanly possible to help them. The Squadron medical detachment worked feverishly to save lives wherever possible.

At the close of the day the Squadron was disposed as follows: the Squadron CP was in Traundorf with E Troop, A was in Stenrogl, B at Traunkirchen and C at Steinbach.

During the night a patrol from A Troop observed four Hitler Jugends who were sniping at another friendly patrol. All four were promptly killed by our patrol. It later proved that these were the last shots fired by the 3rd Cavalry Group in the war.

The 3rd Squadron continued to patrol its zone, scouring the woods for enemy and evacuating prisoners. The camp at Ebensee was a tremendous problem in itself as food and medical supplies were slow in arriving.

7 May—At 1300 this day, while patrol reports were pouring in from both Squadrons,

the 3rd Cavalry Group S-3 received a message from higher headquarters that the Group would cease hostilities at 0001, 9 May. We would refrain from advancing further into enemy territory. This information was sent out immediately to both Squadrons with orders to remain in present positions.

The remainder of this day and the following day all Troops remained in position conducting motors and weapons maintenance. Patrols along the main roads were maintained. All avenues of approach were blocked at strategic points.

At the close of the war in Europe we were located in the following positions. The Squadron CP was still in Traundorf with E Troop, A was in Weyregg, B in Traunkirchen, C in Weissenbach and F Company at Trauneck.

For the period 7 August 1944 to 9 May 1945, it is conservatively estimated that the 3rd Cavalry Squadron exacted a heavy toll from the enemy. Semi-official figures are as follows:

Enemy Killed	1,984
Enemy Wounded	2,127
Enemy Captured	25,554
Total	29,665



German General who surrendered his corps to Lt. Col. Wallach near Steyr

German General giving locations of his troops



These pictures are included only to remind
you of the country in which you operated after
the end of the war.









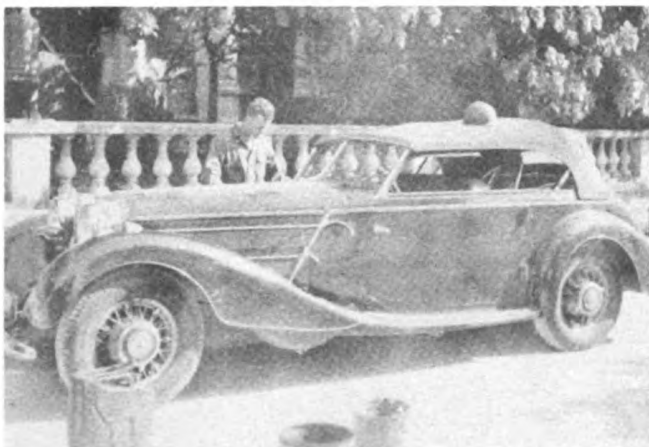
Squadron assembled in field



PWs on way to rear



PWs in trucks



Col. Wallach's "liberated" car



Capt. Baldwin, Lt. Garbowit, Lt. Stumbo



Back row: "Doc" Ingala, Capt. Brennan, Lt. Garbowit, Maj. Vaughn, Maj. Fullencamp — Kneeling: Capt. Kelly, Lt. Stumbo



Col. F. W. Drury, First Group Commander



Loading German Prisoners



Lt. Richards, Capt. Witten, Lt. Jackson
—Attorneys at law



Lt. Stumbo—Hq. Troop, Lt. Larson—
A Troop



Col. Wallach pinning Silver Star on Lt.
Courtwright "B" Troop

Decoration and Awards

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS

Every member of the Third Cavalry takes justifiable pride in the accomplishments of his outfit in the European campaign. To each, his platoon and his Troop was undoubtedly the best. His Squadron, like his Army and his Country, is the finest.

We of the Cavalry, however, know something else. My buddy or yours was the bravest and smartest soldier who ever crossed into enemy territory. The things he did could fill a book. For every individual exploit which has been performed and reported, there were dozens which will live only in our memories. How many times have you said of some soldier "He saved my life!" in as matter-of-fact tone as a discussion of a ball game? He has probably said the same of you as often.

There were innumerable instances of heroism and courage; men were killed and wounded doing the nobler and finer thing for their country — and their buddies. Many a patrol and many a mission was a success simply because a GI took it upon himself to act, as the Army puts it: "Above and beyond the call of duty."

Men do not usually talk about themselves — not the good things, anyway. No one pins medals on himself and doesn't look for someone to pin them on for him. The heat of battle, the absence of anyone to see the act, or sometimes, unfortunately, death keeps forever hidden an act of gallantry that should have been rewarded by one of the medals our country reserves for its finest. Many of our men were rewarded, others have their reward only in the consciousness of having done a good job.

This chapter is dedicated to all of you in the Third, who did your share and more than your share, and to those of the Third who are no longer with us, but whose memories will linger always—Our Heroic Dead.

August 11, 1944—Heroism was the order of the day on the first day in combat. The will to risk almost certain death for a comrade added luster to the stirring achievements begun on this day.

"C" troop, pursuing its first mission, was held up by a road block which was mined and covered by sniper and machine gun fire. A number of men were wounded attempting to penetrate the barrier. Captain Downing and First Lieutenant Baldwin raced into heavy fire to the aid of the helpless men. Administering first aid, both officers carried the seriously wounded men and let the others back to safety.

A platoon of "B" Troop was surprised by concentrated machine gun fire as they were moving on foot through an open field. Two men were wounded. While the rest of the Platoon successfully took cover, Sergeant Harvey V. McMillan and T/5 William J. Gibson, Jr. went to the aid of the wounded men. As murderous gunfire rained relentlessly

around them, each man crawled to the casualties and carried them back to safety.

Captain Downing — Silver Star

Lt. Baldwin — Bronze Star

Sgt. McMillan — Silver Star

T/5 Gibson — Silver Star

August 17, 1944—A thrilling and sacrificial act won the Bronze Star for T/Sgt. Joe Radanovich. A message of vital importance had to be delivered to the troops in combat from Headquarters. No means of communication was available—necessitating personal delivery. Taking a vehicle, Sgt. Radanovich went alone for miles over a road raked by both friendly and enemy artillery fire. After many narrow escapes, he reached the troops and "got the message through."

Sgt. Radanovich — Bronze Star

August 20, 1944—Sergeant Peter Blidy was riding point bantam with his platoon when his vehicle was fired upon by artillery and small arms. His other two crew members were wounded and fell from the vehicle. Instead of seeking safety, he jumped out and ran ahead of the wounded men. Covering the wounded men, he held off the enemy until two vehicles came up to engage the enemy. Then he carried both men to the vehicle and drove them to safety.

Sgt. Blidy — Silver Star

August 28, 1944 (EPERNAY, FRANCE)—Colonel Wallach led a task force to take and hold a vital point at Epernay, France. In the resultant action, now a legendary story known to all of our men, heroism, under most trying circumstances, marked a victorious battle against an enemy vastly superior in numbers. The colonel led a platoon of "A" Troop which battered its way into the town. Outnumbered and virtually trapped, the participants fought off an aggressive enemy. The colonel led the men in the fight, exposing himself repeatedly, going to the aid of the men, travelling through the town to get medical aid and inspiring them finally in leading a concerted attack which drove off the enemy. Captain Hawk led his troop all through the fight and personally exposed himself on two occasions to rescue wounded men. Lieutenant Gay rescued an officer who was seriously wounded and helpless in the face of the enemy. Corporal Wallace Cumbo and T/5 John D. Smith gave their lives in attempting to dash through enemy machine gun fire to the aid of beleaguered comrades. T/4 Balcer and Pfc. Hiram Smith raced under enemy fire to carry wounded troop members to safety. T/5 James Athorn braved the enemy to carry two men who were badly wounded to civilian medical assistance and remain with them although in constant danger of capture or death. In a companion battle, fought by other elements of the task force, Major John J. Marron and S/Sgt. Henry

L. Swift led the troops in capturing the town of La Chappell-Godefroy. Personally exposed, they helped evacuate the wounded and moving about the dangerous area, they led and inspired the men in beating-off repeated enemy counter-attacks.

Lt. Col. Wallach — Bronze Star
Maj. Marron — Bronze Star
Capt. Howk — Silver Star
Lt. Gay — Silver Star
S/Sgt. Swift—Silver Star
T/4 Balcer — Silver Star
Cpl. Cumbo — Bronze Star
T/5 Smith — Bronze Star
T/5 Athorn — Bronze Star
Pfc. Smith — Silver Star

From his advent into battle until he was seriously wounded at Epernay, 1st Lt. Harold T. Richards exhibited a series of courageous acts and superb leadership for which he was awarded the Bronze Star.

September 1, 1944 (THIONVILLE, FRANCE)—In a mission of extreme courage and daring, 1st Lt. James D. Jackson led his platoon deep into enemy territory until he reached Thionville. There, many miles away from the nearest friendly forces, and in the heart of one of the enemy's most heavily fortified and important bastions, the platoon conducted a raid. The result was vast destruction and devastation of enemy forces by a comparative handful of gallant Americans. The small band of men kept the enemy from destroying a strategically important bridge. In the course of the action, Lt. Jackson led his men with supreme skill and daring until he was seriously wounded. T/5 Boughton and T/5 James J. Hickman, the latter wounded in his efforts, destroyed enemy gun emplacements which threatened the platoon at point blank range. S/Sgt. Fred T. Bakers, after distinguishing himself by brilliant leadership in support of his Lieutenant, was killed when he exposed himself to rescue his wounded leader. Private Daniel Kluck dashed across a bridge under withering fire to carry Lt. Jackson back to safety. Sgt. John Orofino, himself wounded and badly shaken, assumed command of the platoon and led them through the enemy infested area back to friendly territory.

Lt. Jackson — Distinguished Service Cross, Croix de Guerre
S/Sgt. Baker — Silver Star
Sgt. Orofino — Silver Star
T/5 Boughton — Silver Star, Croix de Guerre
T/5 Hickman — Silver Star
Pvt. Kluck — Silver Star

September 2, 1944—At Orraville, France, a platoon of "A" Troop encountered fierce enemy fire which halted further progress. In attempting to advance, the platoon became disorganized and the platoon leader led back

as many men as possible. Upon reaching safety, four men, Sgt. Michael Visnyei, Cpl. Joseph M. Buono, T/5 Edward J. Finnigan and Pfc. Leon E. Krantz, volunteered to return in search of mission comrades and vehicles. The men returned with four vehicles after thoroughly reconnoitering the highly dangerous area and ascertaining that none of their comrades had been left helpless in enemy territory.

Sgt. Visnyei — Bronze Star
Cpl. Buono — Bronze Star
T/5 Finnigan — Bronze Star
Pfc. Krantz — Bronze Star

September 5, 1944—A platoon of "A" Troop, in company with other small forces, was trapped by combined enemy artillery and small-arms fire. The odds were overwhelming. In the fighting which followed, several became casualties and others were captured. Lt. Philip S. Eddy and four volunteers, Sgt. John B. Rogers, Sgt. Elias Shyposh, Pvt. Louis Silvia and Pvt. Rex Zufelt, returned into an overwhelming barrage to find their comrades and advanced into a veritable wall of fire, intent only upon establishing contact with their lost comrades. Pvt. Zufelt was badly wounded and later died. Lt. Eddy exposed himself to rescue him in an attempt to save his life. Only when further advance became sheer suicide, did the group return.

Lt. Eddy — Bronze Star
Sgt. Rogers — Bronze Star
Sgt. Shyposh — Bronze Star
Pvt. Silvia — Bronze Star
Pvt. Zufelt — Bronze Star

September 6, 1944—On this day, another unit was operating in conjunction with part of our Squadron. Several of the members of the former organization came upon a minefield. In attempting to negotiate it, three men were seriously wounded and trapped in the field. T/3 Gerald L. McClees, T/4 Everett Hunn and Pfc. John P. Luckette volunteered to enter the mine field. Without regard for unusual dangers, they crawled into the minefield, gave first aid and carried the casualties out.

T/3 McClees — Bronze Star
T/4 Hunn — Bronze Star
Pfc. Luckette — Bronze Star

September 6, 1944—On that same date, but in another action nearby, Sgt. Leonard Dykema crawled onto the battle field, under a heavy barrage to rescue a fellow soldier who had been wounded and who was unable to move from the danger area.

Sgt. Dykema — Silver Star

September 19-25, 1944—Lt. George Garbowit led a team of volunteers, including T/4 Oakley A. Watkins, T/5 Robert Sakowicz, Private Frank Fiumara and Private Robert E. Butts on a series of patrols across the Moselle River. Over the period, the five encountered

heavy enemy resistance, small-arms fire, land mines, barbed wire and other obstacles. Despite these obstacles, they penetrated deep into the enemy territory, often deliberately exposing themselves, and succeeded in reporting information which became highly valuable in future operations.

Lt. Garbowit — Bronze Star
T/4 Watkins — Bronze Star
T/5 Sacowicz — Bronze Star
Pvt. Butts — Bronze Star
Pvt. Fiumara — Bronze Star

September 22, 1944—Private Mike Sica and another soldier were ambushed in their vehicle while on a roving night patrol. His companion was severely wounded and the vehicle temporarily put out of order. Instead of attempting to find refuge, he placed his wounded companion securely in the vehicle and with difficulty set the vehicle in operation, then made his way back to safety, in time to bring aid to the wounded men.

Pvt. Sica — Bronze Star

September 27, 1944—While in action with a task force under the command of Major Curry N. Vaughan, an assault gun was struck by artillery. The vehicle, though shaken, was not put out of action. All the occupants of the vehicle, except the driver, were badly wounded. Major Vaughan, 1st Lt. James W. Stuart, S/Sgt. James T. Hutcherson and S/Sgt. Henry Gritzmacher rushed out into the artillery barrage to the vehicle. Then, with all cooperating, they pulled the wounded men out of the interior of the assault gun and rendered immediate first aid. Using their bodies to protect the wounded and directing the driver of the vehicle, Max L. Hull, who exposed himself in the effort, they laboriously and slowly threaded their way back through the artillery-blasted area to a place of safety, from which the casualties could be evacuated.

Major Vaughan — Bronze Star
1st Lt. Stuart — Silver Star
S/Sgt. Hutcherson — Bronze Star
S/Sgt. Gritzmacher — Bronze Star
T/4 Hull — Bronze Star

October 30, 1944—Lt. Ross R. Courtright and four of his Platoon, Sgt. Edward E. Cody, T/4 Pasquale Danino, T/5 Robert Schmitz and Pvt. Cliff A. McLaughlin, undertook a highly dangerous and spectacular patrol across the Moselle River into the heart of the enemy defenses. Crossing in the dead of night, the patrol made its way through heavily manned and fortified positions until they reached the command post. There, in a surprise battle, they overwhelmed numerically superior forces, siezed valuable documents, and burned down the enemy headquarters. In spite of an alerted enemy garrison, they made their way back to the river bank, where they secreted themselves from the enemy parties, who often passed a

few feet away in their search for our patrol. With the enemy closing in, Lt. Courtright sent the men back across the river while he held off the enemy with rifle fire. When assured that the men were safe on the opposite shore, he swam back himself, followed by fire from enemy small-arms.

Lt. Courtright — Silver Star
Sgt. Cody — Bronze Star
T/4 Danino — Bronze Star
T/5 Schmitz — Bronze Star
Pvt. McLaughlin — Bronze Star

First Lieutenant Henry E. Boren, who was seriously wounded on November 17th, 1944, was cited for outstanding acts from August to the day he became a casualty. Volunteering to take over a combat platoon, he led his men with tireless devotion and with rare skill and ability. His courage and leadership evoked from his men loyalty bordering adoration. Over his combat career, Lt. Boren led innumerable reconnaissance missions, returning with information of detailed accuracy and vital importance. His daring operations and superior performance set him off as outstanding. He was wounded in a gallant dash which brought him across the German border, first in the Third Army to do so. Until forced from combat by the gravity of his wounds, his record had served as an inspiration to the entire Squadron.

Lt. Boren — Silver Star

November 17, 1944—Sensing that his platoon leader was in danger, Sgt. Kenneth Weatherholt, raced his armored car crew through a town to a house where he found that the officer and several of the platoon were trapped. Dispersing the enemy outside the house, he led the men inside, surprised and killed the remaining enemy. Rushing to the cellar, he found the lieutenant, bleeding profusely from serious wounds. Quickly he carried him to the armored car and raced him to medical aid, an act which saved his leader's life.

Sgt. Weatherholt — Bronze Star

November 18, 1944—S/Sgt. Salvatore Pappalardo and Cpl. Joe E. Marlowe led a patrol of six against a company of 60 Germans who were supported by several machine gun emplacements in an advantageous position on a hill. Sending one man back for reinforcements, they divided our patrol and going to opposite sides of the hill, from which point they directed cross-enfilade fire on the enemy, killing many and trapping the remainder until reinforcements came up to take the remnants prisoner.

S/Sgt. Pappalardo — Bronze Star
Cpl. Marlowe — Bronze Star

November 19, 1944—T/5 Richard P. Sacula and T/5 Albin Schank rushed to an

armored car to administer assistance to all four crew members who had been severely wounded when the vehicle was destroyed by bazooka shells. As they approached the scene in a plainly marked ambulance, the enemy ignored the insignia and machine gunned the ambulance at point blank range. Ignoring the grave threat, both men dismounted and rushed to the car. They extricated the wounded occupants, administered medical aid and then, with the protection of a tank which came up to give cover, they carried the casualties to the ambulance and evacuated them.

T/5 Sadula — Bronze Star

T/5 Schank — Bronze Star

November 23, 1944—During a fierce artillery barrage which fell upon the Troop's bivouac area, T/4 Elmer C. Jacobsen observed from his sheltered position that one of his buddies, Gerald W. McDavid, had been struck by shrapnel and had fallen, blood spurting from his neck. Jacobsen rushed forth to his comrade and grasped his neck artery, in an effort to stem the flow of life blood. He stayed on covering his comrade's body from the shelling and holding on until he was relieved by a medical officer.

T/4 Jacobson — Bronze Star

November 29, 1944—In an enemy counter-attack near the pillboxes, Lt. Oscar A. Williams and a soldier beside him, Edward J. Finnigan, were badly wounded, ostensibly by mines. Both Lt. Williams and Edward J. Finnigan had the right foot blown off. Ignoring his own wounds, as well as the enemy peril, Lt. Williams carried and dragged Finnigan a great distance towards the pillboxes. Lt. Christian H. Weber, from a pillbox, saw the plight and, disregarding the intense enemy fire, ran out into the open and carried both men inside to shelter and safety.

Lt. Weber — Silver Star

Lt. Williams — Silver Star

December 3, 1944—James J. Kearns, then Pfc., saved the members of a patrol of six by daring and clever tactics. On a patrol, the members were surprised by a machine gun emplacement which opened up directly on them. The leader ordered all the men back, but Kearns, instead of retiring, moved forward towards the enemy, firing as he proceeded. The enemy concentrated all their fire on him. As a result, the other patrol members were able to get out of the range of the perilously close fire. When sure that his comrades were out of danger, Kearns employed masterful tactics to dodge backward and fire until he had returned to safety.

Pfc. Kearns — Silver Star

James Dodson, competent and fearless communications man, set an enviable record of accomplishment from the time of his entry

into combat in August until he was mortally wounded on 21 December 1944. His task was primarily to establish and maintain communications between the Platoons and the Command Post of "C" Troop. Many times he went far out into the battlefield to repair or set up lines of communications. Often he worked for extended periods during artillery barrages and under enemy fire. On several notable occasions, his courage in working, unaided in areas harassed by the enemy, produced important results. His loss deprived the Squadron of one of its most capable and courageous members.

Dodson — Silver Star

December 31, 1944—Heroism under great stress marked the patrol of ten enlisted men and Lt. Eddy across the Moselle on the bitter winter night of December 31st, 1944. The patrol consisted of 1st Lt. Philip S. Eddy, Cpl. Leo Kubiak, T/5 Charles F. McManus, T/5 Thomas G. Funtsch, T/5 Massimo Bachetti, T/5 Walter A. Senck, T/5 Donald F. Hill, Pfc. Everett C. Branham, Pfc. Earl T. Ropp, Pfc. Merritt S. Gwinn and Pfc. George Ekis, Jr. Crossing the river in the dead of night, they penetrated far into enemy territory, despite enemy shelling and intense cold. On one occasion they were trapped for several hours under a fierce barrage. At the crucial moment, the enemy unleashed a barrage which mortally wounded Lt. Eddy and Cpl. Kubiak. Two men, Gwinn and Branham stayed with Kubiak's body to carry it back to the river bank despite grave difficulties and dangers. The remainder, under the lead of T/5 McManus, who took command, formed a protective ring around Lt. Eddy who was still alive. Then, all proceeded, slowly and carefully, carrying their leader, tenderly, back to the river bank . . . still under fire. The group succeeded after many tribulations in bringing their leader back across the river to medical aid in a valorous, but futile, effort to save his life. Then Pfc. Ekis set out to find Gwinn and Branham. He found them; they had carried their comrade back, had been forced by enemy pressure to swim the river and were now on the west bank, protecting their fallen friend with their rifles. They maintained their vigil for all of the next day and night. All three recrossed the river to bring back the body of their comrade.

T/5 McManus — Silver Star

T/5 Funtsch — Bronze Star

T/5 Bacchetti — Bronze Star

T/5 Senck — Bronze Star

T/5 Hill — Bronze Star

Pfc. Gwinn — Silver Star

Pfc. Branham — Silver Star

Pfc. Ekis — Silver Star

Pfc. Hill — Bronze Star

Pfc. Ropp — Bronze Star

January 3, 1945—Sgt. Jack Dulin led an

advance patrol to secure an assembly area in the woods for elements of the Squadron which were following at a considerable distance. With him were Pfc. Lyle Silvernail and two other men, Hunt and Young. In their advance, at night they were ambushed by ten of the enemy who were supported by bazookas and machine guns. The enemy's opening volley seriously wounded Young and Hunt, the former succumbing to his wounds. Silvernail was badly hurt and Dublin received painful but not disabling wounds. Instantly Dulin and Silvernail returned fire and moved rapidly to the severely stricken men. Crawling astride the men, they opened fire on the enemy while protecting their fallen comrades with their own bodies. They succeeded in driving off the enemy after which they managed, with great difficulty, to bring the fallen men back to medical aid.

Sgt. Dulin — Silver Star **

Pfc. Silvernail — Silver Star **

** These medals were awarded by the late General Patton.

February 8-9, 1945—On this night, a patrol of eight men crossed the Saar River on a reconnaissance operation. On their return, they ran afoul of a hitherto undiscovered enemy minefield. All the men were wounded except for one, Janas C. Fleming, T/4, Company "F". He made his way back to the Company command post where he told Captain Timothy C. Brennan of the calamity. Capt. Brennan quickly organized a rescue party which Fleming led to the scene. In view of the great dangers, Capt. Brennan ordered all of the men to remain behind except Fleming, Pfc. Lawrence D. Henry and Sgt. Joseph Romanowski who had volunteered to enter with him. With the courageous Captain leading the way, they slowly worked their way through several hundred yards of the minefield. Their difficulties were further complicated by the darkness. At length, Captain Brennan reached one of his soldiers, Cpl. Harold Shnider, who himself was wounded, but was gamely attempting to lead the other casualties out. Shnider, as best he could, described the path he had travelled and the rescuers went on. Shnider refused aid or assistance and insisted on remaining where he was as a guide. Capt. Brennan went farther on into the minefield where he found one of his men helpless with a leg blown off. With great difficulty, he lifted the man and carried him out of the minefield to safety. The others in the meantime had found the remaining casualties and were helping and leading them out. Captain Brennan returned to assist further and Shnider, himself suffering, assisted the other wounded men until all, rescuers and rescued, had returned to safety.

Captain Brennan — Silver Star

Sgt. Romanowski — Silver Star

T/4 Fleming — Silver Star

Cpl. Shnider — Silver Star

Pfc. Henry — Silver Star

February 25, 1945—H. L. Williams and another man volunteered to cross the Saar river to bring back an officer and EM who had crossed the river on extended reconnaissance two days earlier. Pre-arranged signals were somehow ineffective with the result that Williams' companion, Stackpole, landed away from the designated spot. In searching for the two men, Stackpole was killed. Hearing shots, Williams set out in the direction of the noise for his comrade. He found him dead at the river bank. In an effort to save him, Williams picked up the body of the soldier, who in size was much larger than himself. Despite severe difficulties and dangers from the enemy, he carried him back to the reconnaissance boat and brought him back to the friendly side of the river.

Cpl. H. L. Williams — Bronze Star

March 3, 1945—William J. Porter led a party of men to reconnoiter a bridge and a mill beyond it which was suspected of being used as an enemy emplacement. With artillery and small arms threatening the patrol, Porter ordered all others to stay behind and went alone to reconnoiter the area. In doing so he was mortally wounded, but still managed to make his way back to his comrades. He insisted on being returned to his troop command post where he imparted the information he had gained; he died shortly thereafter.

T/5 Porter — Silver Star

March 6, 1945—Pfc. Everett Cole, delivered a vital load of gasoline from the supply dump to our forward troops, discovered a strong ambush astride the route of travel. With two other soldiers he attacked the enemy, diverting them so that other vehicles could evade the ambush; when his ammunition was exhausted, he contacted an infantry unit and led them to the enemy positions. After which he delivered his badly needed cargo to the troops.

Pfc. Everett Cole — Bronze Star

March 6, 1945—On this day the enemy made a concerted counter-attack in strength on our positions. Col. Wallach grasped the situation, instituted immediate and thoroughly effective counter-measures which stifled the thrust. Col. Wallach was present at the scene at all times. His inspiring presence as well as his leadership played the major part in putting down the enemy. Col. Polk, Group Commander cited the Colonel with the award of the Silver Star.

Col. Wallach — Silver Star

In the same counter-attack, "A" troop played a magnificent part. Many of its mem-

bers coordinated their activity to drive back the enemy. First to see the enemy was Sgt. Elias Shyposh, who rushed out into the road to fire on the enemy, giving the alarm that set the troop into action. His quick action drove back a number of the enemy from a heavy artillery piece that the enemy were about to capture. Privates First Class Matthew Laich, George Ekis, Jr., and Joseph Kraynick manned mortars, throwing effective barrages into the ranks of the enemy, killing many and driving off others. This action was notable in view of the situation where they were exposed to strong enemy fire. T/5 Charles H. Collison, Pfc. Paul E. Callicoat and Pfc. John W. Klienmann rode out, unprotected, into the middle of the roadway in a machine gun bantam and with nothing more than a machine gun and their sidearms they held off a large number of the enemy until combined forces drove them from the town.

Sgt. Elias Shyposh — OLC to Bronze Star

T/5 Collison — Bronze Star

Pfc. Callicoat — Bronze Star

Pfc. Kleinmann — Bronze Star

Pfc. Matthew Laich — Bronze Star

Pfc. Joseph Kraynick — Bronze Star

Pfc. George Ekis, Jr. — Bronze Star

On the same day, in a totally removed action, two of our medics, Raymond G. Herold and John P. Luckette, won honors. An infantry regiment fighting nearby lost contact with a platoon. The platoon members sustained severe losses, and with no means of communication, their casualties were in desperate plight. One of their number came through to our lines and made known the situation. Herold and Luckette voluntarily took an ambulance for several miles over difficult terrain under continuous barrage to evacuate the casualties. They repeated the trip until all the casualties had been evacuated.

Raymond G. Herold — Bronze Star

John P. Luckette — OLC to Bronze Star

March 12, 1945—"F" Company tanks were used against enemy positions on that day. In the course of serious uphill fighting against well-emplaced and strongly manned positions, one tank was deployed so that it ran into a minefield. The tank was wrecked by the explosion of a mine. Sergeant William Rosen ordered his tank into the minefield to aid the disabled tank. He found that two of the crew had managed to extricate themselves from the tank and had escaped enemy fire but the remaining three were trapped and wounded in the interior of the tank. Sgt. Rosen jumped onto the tank and with the aid of two of his crew, Pvt. William Kolad and Pvt. Robert B. Muscato, extricated the casualties from the wreck. Then still under fire, the men placed

the wounded on the deck of their tank and, covering them with their own bodies, drove them out of the range of enemy fire.

Sgt. Rosen — Silver Star

Pvt. Kolad — Bronze Star

Pvt. Muscato — Bronze Star

March 13, 1945—Riol with its bloodshed and great heroism! As if by tradition, members of the Third Cavalry, attacked by an overwhelming force, came through in courage and tactical skill to batter back a fanatic enemy in desperate fighting. Two hundred or more enemy, supported by powerful artillery and giant Mark IV tanks, plunged against "B" Troop's line in a sustained assault which was beaten back after hours of bitter struggle. The entire Troop fought with all the strength that could be summoned. Amongst them stood out several whose gallant actions above the call of duty earned them well merited awards.

As the enemy battered against the Troop, temporary withdrawals were necessary. A disorganized platoon, with many casualties was forced to pull back to safer positions. Lieutenant Dye supported by Sergeants Cody and Kearns affected the withdrawal, by leading the men, carrying the wounded, assisting others, and moving equipment. All during the ferocious onslaught, these three repeatedly exposed themselves moving among the men giving inspiration and leadership. Three men, Lauletta, Wenger and Demnati, jumped onto tanks and mounted 50 cal. machine guns against the enemy. All distinguished themselves without the slightest hesitation, as though the situation seemed to suggest it. Lesinski ran out time after time, hours on end, into the open, to the side of the wounded. Many times his life was threatened by concentrations of fire and by artillery but he was ever with the wounded, firing his gun, covering his fallen comrades, giving first aid and evacuating them from the field of battle.

Lt. Dye — Silver Star

S/Sgt. Cody — Silver Star

Sgt. Kearns — Bronze Star

T/5 Wenger — Silver Star

T/5 Lesinski — Distinguished Service Cross

Pfc. Lauletta — Silver Star

Pfc. Demnati — Silver Star

March 13, 1945—Pvt. Petro Saccoccia, "F" Company, at Riol, Germany, went to the aid of a tank which had been shattered by an exploding mine. Driving his own tank into the minefield, he reached the wrecked vehicle where his three crew men dismounted to extricate two helpless casualties. Amid continuous enemy fire, Pvt. Saccoccia exposed himself deliberately to man his .50 calibre machine gun to cover his companions till the wounded men had been evacuated.

Pvt. Saccoccia — Bronze Star

March 16, 1945—On this day, one of the bloodiest in the history of the Squadron, were performed deeds which will rank among the great in valorous deeds of this war.

A platoon of "B" Troop mounted on the tanks of a platoon from "F" Company and rode into the Riol Woods against the enemy. After considerable progress, the force came to a clearing in the woods where they were overcome by powerful enemy artillery and cleverly concealed enemy forces in the woods. As a result, all the tanks were knocked out and the men, those that were not killed, were milling about, a confused and disorganized group, directly in the range of enemy fire. Pfc. Laurence D. Henry, seizing the initiative, mounted a tank and fired the .50 caliber machine gun against the enemy to cover his comrades while they sought to reorganize themselves and seek cover. Sgts. Kearns and Cody, leaders in desperate fighting a few days earlier rose to the occasion again. With Cpl. Grahovac participating, they oriented the men and led them safely into the woods, while fighting off the enemy. In the woods, they were harassed by the enemy, but led the men in fighting off the foe. T/5 Marvin carried a seriously wounded comrade through the entire distance of several miles to medical aid . . . an act which saved his comrade's life. Sgt. Frederick Wysocki, in the same action, covered the retreat of his crew members to safety; then after surprising and killing several enemy, he went to the aid of wounded comrades. In so doing, he was captured, but still persisted in aiding his comrades. Finally, he was forced by his captors to retreat with them. After several days with them, he persuaded the enemy, 15 in number, to return with him to the American lines, where they surrendered.

When the platoons had lost contact with the Troop, a ten man patrol, led by Cpl. Daniel Kluck and Roy E. Sawyer, entered the woods in search of them. In the same open clearing, they were surprised by enemy machine gun emplacements which killed two of the patrol. Kluck and Sawyer immediately engaged the nearest machine gun nest and kept up their fire until, the remainder of the patrol, free of the fire which was concentrated on the two leaders, made their escape. Both, although repeatedly wounded, fired,

Sawyer dying in the effort. Then Kluck, badly wounded, instead of seeking medical aid and safety, made for a machine gun nest at the opposite end of the field which he either destroyed or drove off. He was killed by mortar fire.

Lt. Courtright left in search of the patrol. In so doing, he passed through the same areas and was perilously within the range of enemy fire many times. Despite continued dangers, he scoured the territory on a futile search for the men.

Lt. Courtright — Bronze Star

S/Sgt. Cody — Bronze Star (Oak Leaf Cluster)

Sgt. Kearns — Bronze Star

Sgt. Wysocki — Silver Star

Cpl. Grahovac — Silver Star

Cpl. Kluck — Bronze Star

(Action pending on recommendation for the Congressional Medal of Honor)

T/5 Marvin — Silver Star

Pfc. Sawyer—(Action pending on recommendation for the Distinguished Service Cross)

Pfc. Henry — (Action pending on recommendation for the Distinguished Service Cross.)

April 1, 1945—An armored car of "C" Troop was beset by bazooka fire which seriously wounded all the crew. All but T/5 Orville Bostic died from the wounds. As the platoon leader tried to leave the tank, Bostic assisted him and helped him rush back to aid and safety. The platoon leader ordered him to seek safety for himself and to leave the machine gun-infested area, but he refused, staying by his side until the leader could not go on. Then, despite crippling wounds, he went on to summon medical aid. Capt. Walter A. Rihl, Squadron Surgeon, and his assistant, T/3 Gerald McClees, rushed to the scene; despite enemy fire in the area and despite exploding bullets and shells within the armored car, both mounted the car to extricate the bodies in an effort to give whatever medical aid was possible.

Capt. Rihl — Silver Star

T/3 McClees — Silver Star

T/5 Bostic — Bronze Star



Special Events

THIRTY MEN AT THIONVILLE

By Corporal Joseph Bleich

Our Mission began on a Friday, early in the afternoon of August the thirty-first.

A message was radioed to the armored car of Lieutenant James D. Jackson in command of the First Platoon from Captain Ivan L. McCracken of Troop "B".

"Stop. Mission changed. Return to——. Cross river at ——."

As radio operator in the armored car of Platoon Sergeant Baker, I listened to the long message coming through in staccato rhythm of two-lettered Morse groups in code. As I had no key chart, the message was meaningless when it discontinued from clear text, but within the next twenty-four hours I was to discover its contents.

The six bantams and three armored cars of the first Platoon were dispersed on a hill overlooking the obscure village of Bethenville. Below us, to the east, was Verdun, a huge cone of smoke rising up from its buildings. When word was spread that the mission was changed, there was a feeling of relief among all thirty of us in the Platoon and we hoped that our work was done for the day. The present task had put us on edge. There was heavy artillery in the vicinity and reports persistently indicated that we were on our way toward fixed positions of heavy enemy fire and some panzer units.

Soon, the inhabitants of Bethenville gathered about our vehicles. There was the usual chatter of unintelligible French, the proffer of prune brandy, the waving of small tri-colored flags and the curious inspection of our motors and guns. Some of the men took this opportunity to open "C" rations, sharing the biscuits with the excited children and giving them all of the sugar and candies.

"Mount up". We heard the command and with a polite "Allez", which we had learned meant, "Get moving", we motioned the French out of our way. Our column drove toward Verdun, entering that city and staying just long enough to attract sniper fire and one bad miss from German artillery. We quickly moved out of the city and headed north while over our inter-phone platoon radio net through the voice sets of the 508 and 510 we listened to the routine check-up on gas sufficiency, condition of the cars and the orders from Lieutenant Jackson as to rate of speed and manner of travel. Thus in the late afternoon while the souging trees and descending sun suggested twilight and bivouac we began our journey to Thionville by the River Moselle, near Luxembourg, near Ger-

many. But we did not know our destination at that time.

We were on the road barely twenty minutes and approaching the first village out of Verdun when a Boche Sergeant, hands upraised and his motor cycle prone at his feet, surrendered. We turned him over to the French, weapons and all because there is neither time nor room for prisoners in a reconnaissance platoon. Our column slowly forged ahead along the narrow road, lined on each side by thick woods with too many curves suitable for machine gun nests for us to be comfortable. Cautiously poking our way along, we next encountered a group of at least thirty Germans as computed by the number of cycles they had left on the road as they took up concealed positions in the woods. The men in the bantams dismounted and assumed firing positions in the woods. The firing commenced. Lieutenant Jackson drove up to the point to look over the situation. A concussion grenade flew out of the woods landing between a bantam and the command armored car. When the smoke cleared we were relieved to see that no one was injured. Lieutenant Jackson ordered us to move on and so we did leaving enemy dead and wounded on the roadsides.

It was after this encounter that our Lieutenant's voice came over the radio.

"We have to keep moving faster to reach our objective. From what I see there will be disorganized enemy groups before us. We cannot stop and dismount as we have just done or we will get into trouble. I will take the point and we will fire on the move if anything gets in our way."

With "Jack" as he was fondly known to his men, in the lead position, the platoon moved at an approximate pace of forty. Soon we heard the armored car's 37 mm cannon and machine guns from the front of the column. There was a short halt and then we moved on passing an overturned truck with enemy dead all about. On the hard road ahead, darkening with the deepening sky many Germans lay sprawled along the way, their blood making dark streaks across our path. Every man thought for himself and said nothing as we listened to our Lieutenant's voice over phones and speakers. It was a calm voice, untriumphant, almost apologetic, saying, "We have to move this way and do these things to reach our objective."

The platoon reached and entered a small village. There was not a soul on the street

and every door in every home was shut and every window closed. The place bore evidence of German occupation with signs in the enemy language everywhere. Our cars moved suspiciously and slowly expecting at any moment to be precipitated into a village struggle but nothing occurred to break the reigning silence. The place seemed deserted. After leaving the village we immediately turned around and re-entered greatly surprising the people who had flocked to the streets. They excitedly ran for cover but returned to our vehicles upon discovering that we were Americans. The villagers had never seen Americans. They informed us that the Germans had left late in the afternoon, a few hours before our entry. We left town and turned up a rural road in quest of a bivouac area. Five unfortunate Germans ran into us and I saw four of them lying quietly by the road after our firing was done. I observed one in particular, an officer resplendently dressed in ample white cavalry breeches and a summery forest green blouse. A few minutes later we bivouacked near a farm, taking for our site a height which commanded a view of the roads leading north and northeast.

The farm seemed uninhabited but when a small group of us entered the barnyard to search the premises for any enemy, the farmer haltingly appeared before us. Despite the near darkness I could read the fear written upon the farmer's face. I saw his expression change to puzzlement and when he heard us speak, he broke into a diminutive convulsion of smiles and restrained joyous shouts for his wife and children. "Les Americains, Les Americains", came from his throat. He had never seen Yanks before, but since we were not Germans nor French, we could be nothing but Americans. Upon being questioned he informed us that a battalion of the enemy, mainly with horse-drawn vehicles had preceded us by about four hours and that a few kilometers away there was a garrison of more than a thousand enemy. He did not know whether they had departed.

The farmhouse was a great comfort to all of us. It was the first time since we had landed in France that we sat on chairs and ate from plates on a table. We took our turn in groups of eight to enjoy a supper of bacon and eggs with wine. The farmer and his family could not do enough for us and we matched his generosity with an exchange of rations, cigarettes, coffee and even a bottle of cognac. It was an incident of international good will unparalleled in the history of foreign diplomacy; this little incident of a French farmer with wife, son, and daughter opening their home to the thirty men of the First Platoon. Before departure, the farmer was good enough to provide us with hot water which meant warm coffee to start us on our mission further toward

the east. But before morning, there was still the ominous night before us.

After placing our vehicles at three vantage points for observation and for firing if necessary, we were ready for the night. Then we heard the pain-racked voice of one of the Germans we had left for dead on the road. His moans and supplications for help came from the direction of the dark woods. None of us felt too happy about it and we were selfishly relieved when his torment ceased. There was only the silence again. During the night, a Heinie plane droned and hovered over our heads and towards morning, snipers shot at us out of the darkness. We did not return their fire as we had no desire to reveal our positions. A mortar was set up at six hundred yards just in case the situation grew warmer. Two guards were at the guns in each of the armored cars and the rest of us lay on the ground, rolled in our blankets, awaiting our turn on guard, awake and thinking things over until the break of morning.

Time no longer matters to a soldier on the front. It was only yesterday that our Squadron, the Third Cavalry, left the hot sands and red tile barracks of its garrison at Camp Gordon, Georgia. The train ride to New York, the voyage across to England, the crossing of the Channel to France becomes a matter of seconds. Once in France, days and nights are meshed together with bivouacs, convoys by blackout and riding and fighting across the valleys, fields, hills and forests. Time and date become lost in the triumphant crossing of rivers—the Yonne, the Seine, the Aisne, the Marne, the Meuse. Our memories become an infinitesimal thread in the swift liberation of France. Within the short space of three weeks, the troops of the Third Cavalry had become veterans.

It happens quickly, becoming a part of the war in France, just another outfit bivouacked in the fields at night under friendly booming of heavy artillery hurling its shells to crush the enemy ahead. Soon enough your outfit becomes a part of the scene of dark vehicles moving along the roads at night against the orange horizon of a burning town. Very quickly, you become one with the throb of the ack-ack guns and the tracings of fire skyward. You become part of the clanking stream of guns and combat vehicles, one with the mass movement toward the east. It becomes difficult to think about yourself while lying awake in bivouac.

The next morning only a few minutes before breaking bivouac, we observed a column of German trucks moving along the road we were to take. We took the side roads to bypass them and returned to the main route. Soon, we realized that we were so deep in enemy territory that avoiding contact with the enemy was impossible. German vehicular

traffic flowed through every highway under our observation and their trucks were in every village we would have to go through. It became obvious that the order to proceed by fire against the enemy in our path was in accordance with circumstances.

Lieutenant Jackson ordered our vehicles to move around a village with protection for our flanks and rear. We opened fire with the 37s and machine guns at eleven trucks parked near some houses. They were apparently being concealed from our air force which was bombing to our left. Some of the vehicles we hit were loaded with ammunition and they exploded, setting the houses near them on fire.

A few minutes after leaving the smoking village we came across another village filled with German motors and personnel. Our platoon net buzzed with messages reporting vehicles from every direction. The orders were to Fire! Fire! Bantams and armored cars reported successful target hits to the rear and both flanks.

When we cleared this village our platoon traveled across a flat valley and became as visible as the enemy on the unobstructed highways that threaded the landscape. Fortunately, the enemy vehicles carried no cannon and offered little resistance. Some of their crews leaped out of their cars to surrender but this hardly was the time or place for the platoon to accumulate captives. We set their vehicles afire with heavy explosive shells and machine-gun fire. One column of trucks sped across a distant highway racing for a patch of woods to escape our observation, but three of them remained behind, consumed by flame. There were times when the roads before us were without enemy trucks but, ever so often, a Boche passenger car would fall into the trap of our guns.

We had spent the entire morning in this manner and were fast becoming tired. It soon became our hope to pass some stretch of this Nazi infested territory which would be free of targets. We were not to realize this desire. On village streets, forest roads, and valley highways, through Bras, Vacherauville, Mangiennes, Spincourt, and Piennes, and Landres and Audun, burning trucks, exploding ammunition carriers and innumerable Boche casualties gave mute evidence of the direction in which the platoon was travelling.

Our column proceeded due east and we reached a large town called Audun. There the French were very helpful and warned us of machine gun emplacements in the heart of town around the church and of more Boche near the railroad station. They clambered on top of our vehicles and guided us through the back streets and lanes, across a railroad trestle and bridge. Soon Audun was behind us but within distance as we heard a terrific explosion and wondered if the bridge we had just crossed had been blown up.

Our small group of thirty Americans in three armored cars and six bantams penetrated deeper into the converted German province of Lorraine, passing Fontoy, Knutange, and Hayange where we picked up an ex-sergeant in the French Marines who guided us to Thionville, or Diedenhofen, as the Germans had renamed it. Driving east, the Frenchman, appropriately named Gabriel, soon pointed to the southwestern entrance to our destination and then curled himself around the cradle of the turret machine gun of the command armored car eloquently expressing in such a manner that he was going to ride in with the boys.

There was Diedenhofen, an industrial city of ninety thousand strongly garrisoned by the German Army, within walking distance from Luxembourg, and an hour's ride from Saarbrücken. To the men of the platoon, entering the city was like crossing the frontier of France. Streets bore such names as Hitlers Strasse and Goering Platz. Signposts, wall bulletins, store windows, and engravings on building fronts were in German lettering. The architecture of the houses, the winding narrow streets seemed unfamiliar and above all, the calm behavior of the people was in marked contrast to the heretofore tumultuous welcome of the French. Boche soldiers walked the sidewalks and army vehicles traveled the streets bearing the familiar enemy green camouflage. It could well have been a busy thoroughfare in Berlin.

There was pandemonium in Thionville as the American patrol drove through the streets. An air raid was in full swing, planes circled and descended to bomb the high black stack of a huge metal plant. An air raid siren screamed in a maddening and continuous wail. The armored cars of Lt. Jackson and Sgt. Baker moved side by side through the narrow streets in the manner of assault tanks with the wake of six tiny bantams behind. The third armored car brought up the rear. Lead poured into the right and left intersection as the column reached corners. Machine guns from the bantams clattered and fatally dealt with the Germans on the streets. Grenades performed for a brief violent moment on enemy groups. Rifle fire broke countless window panes, shots being levelled wherever a sniper was seen. Vehicles became targets, and were left blazing and exploding on every street. The three 37 mm cannons of the armored cars roared with high explosive shells. A Volkswagen drawn by two wildly running horses appeared in front of the column. Machine guns pumped lead into the hooded vehicle and suddenly there was a terrific explosion, the entire street seemed to come apart. The destroyed load of ammunition left a gory sight of horses and men. The sidewalks were littered with German dead and their destroyed vehicles. Suffering Boche

wounded lay against the building. Everywhere were sights of pain and flame, a colossal scene of destruction confined within the narrow streets of Thionville which made that city the very spectacle of hell.

The entry of American forces so distant from the front lines was too astounding a fact to grasp. A German officer mistakingly greeted the column with a "Heil Hitler" and received a return salutation of fire. The element of surprise was sufficient to bring a small white flag out of the window of an imposing white building which appeared to be some official headquarters of the enemy. Humor entered into the situation when as the firing continued, two small flags appeared and finally, a huge bedsheet.

We entered the city at four o'clock in the afternoon, and for three hectic hours the voice of Lieutenant Jackson over the radio sounded in full command. Every minute of each hour appropriate orders for each moment of danger emanated from the command car. When there was nothing much else to do but drive down the streets firing, the voice of "Jack" could be heard above the clamor and gun fire encouraging his men forward.

The call signs of our radio posts were named after the person in command of the vehicle and the entire movement of the platoon was conducted by radio.

Lieutenant Jackson would call the Platoon Sergeant's armored car.

"Hello, Jack to Fred, over".

"Fred to Jack, over."

"Hello, Jack to Fred—line your car up with mine, Fred; protect my left flank and fire on my orders."

"Fred to Jack, Roger out."

"Hello, Jack to Fred—machine gun on your left."

Sergeant Fred Baker would instruct his gunner to pour lead into the left intersection his armored car was passing. Lieutenant Jackson would be heard ordering Boughton, his gunner, on the interphone.

"M. G. Boughton, M. G."

Machine gun fire would be heard on the right intersection.

"Keep moving, men, keep moving."

Slowly, the two armored cars moved side by side.

"H. E., Boughton."

The blast of the command car's 37 mm cannon was heard and a German truck blazed on the corner.

"More H. E., Boughton."

A terrific explosion rent the air.

"An ammunition vehicle, men: that was the explosion. Keep moving along. M.G., M.G., M.G., Fred."

We could hear his voice calling "Column alert!" There was a note of paternal anxiety in our Lieutenant's voice as he waited for each vehicle to answer his call. Every man of

the Platoon held his breath at the pause before the reply. Everyone answered and each voice over the air was mixed with emotion.

"You are all here. Very good, very good," came the relieved voice of our platoon leader.

And so in the midst of the battle, this column alert was repeated. It was a radio ritual of a buddy asking for buddy. "Are we still all here—is everybody O.K.?" And the American names of Jack, Fred, Clarence, Harry and Stewart sounded good to all of us in this place the Boche called Diedenhofen.

"Jack" was heard addressing his driver, Bossenberger, an American of German parentage. "Take it slow, Boss, Hold it, Boss. Yes, Bossy learn how to salute Hitler, we will be in Berlin soon."

Perhaps Lieutenant Jackson was not aware of the litany he maintained over the air.

"Where we are going, nobody knows—when we get there—if we get there—what we'll do, nobody knows."

All of us could feel the strain under which our platoon leader labored when he unconsciously spoke to himself with his microphone depressed.

"If we get there, we will have to dig seventeen feet deep."

Once the column stopped.

"H.E., Boughton,—more H.E., more H.E."

The blast of the 37 sounded thrice.

"There is a tank down the street."

A few more shots of heavy explosive roared from the command car and then he ordered the platoon to move on. We moved down the streets under the ugly muzzle of an 88 mm cannon on a German medium tank which seemed intact but apparently no one was inside.

"If we pass it—no one will believe it—pass it we must—let's keep moving."

An old Frenchman came up the street waving his hat in a dignified bow from the waist.

"Looks like we are being welcomed by the mayor. The old man insists on a ceremony, that will probably give the Nazi enough time to bring up the assault forces."

The platoon moved on.

Before we could reach the bridge, there was a tri-sected intersection with a background of trees, an excellent place for enemy artillery.

"If our boys haven't blasted their heavies, it may be tough!"

To our great relief, we saw the woods aflame. The air force had done its job well.

Upon reaching the bridge, a concrete span over the Moselle River, we discovered that the enemy had taken up strong defensive positions. Intense fire was directed at us from the wooded eastern banks of the river. Sniper fire was heavy from the buildings facing the western approaches to the bridge. Lt. Jackson

spoke over the radio to us. We listened to his orders with full confidence.

The men took up dismounted positions behind their vehicles as directed. Lt. Jackson dismounted from his armored car and calmly walked about the bullet raked area giving his orders. An hour of bitter fighting against a numerically superior enemy in secure defensive positions followed. Lt. Jackson was wounded on the bridge which he had crossed to cut the wire that connected the explosive charges. Sgt. Baker, who assumed command, was fatally wounded by a sniper's bullet. Casualties were mounting amongst the ban-tam crews and two of the cars were so badly disabled that they had to be destroyed by incendiaries. It was best to retreat, but not before some of the platoon's cars crossed the dynamite-laden bridge to retrieve "Jack" did we fight our way out of Thionville.

Blasting the enemy vehicles in our way, we detoured around a tremendous road block while the rumble of tanks, echoed ominously behind us. The valiant French sergeant, good Gabriel, was perched on top of the turret of the lead armored car directing our battered reconnaissance unit safely out of the city.

Once on the country highway, we drove furiously for the friendly front lines, through cheering French towns again until we reached our command post. Lt. Jackson was so seriously wounded that blood plasma had to be administered on the spot. The body of Platoon Sergeant Baker was taken out of his armored car. Sergeant Orofino, suffering from a grenade concussion, wept bitterly. Corporal Hickman, Privates First Class Goldstein, Cavanaugh and Vander Ploeg were wounded. There were seven casualties, but the platoon had accounted for one hundred twelve vehicles destroyed, a medium and a light tank knocked out of action, and an estimated sixteen hundred dead and wounded Germans.

It was dark when we left our wounded comrades with the Medical Corps. Night had fallen, the end of another day—the end of another mission.

ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN

In the early phases of the Saar River bridgehead, the 3rd Cavalry Group was attached to the 94th Division. The 3rd Squadron held a sector on the north flank of the division zone. We had been expecting a German attack; one morning at 0400 it came. It consisted of about 450 infantry with plenty of artillery support. The attack was successfully repulsed and an immediate counter-attack launched. With our artillery in support, one reconnaissance troop and a light tank company pushed out. In a very short time we

had the field to ourselves, not counting the many dead Krauts, of course. Eighty-six Germans were taken, among them a young lieutenant who had the doubtful honor of being one of the last graduates of the now defunct OCS at Metz.

With very little urging, the lieutenant gave some very interesting information. He said that of the 450 Germans who started the attack, only 45 succeeded in getting back alive. A hasty survey showed that our tanks and artillery had accounted for 316 casualties, in addition to the PWS taken.

Our grievous error was pointed out, however, by a copy of the German field order for the attack, which was captured a few days later. In that order the Heinie G-2 revealed that they had surprisingly accurate information on our situation. They knew exactly who was opposing them. The order further stated that, following their attack, the 3rd Cavalry Squadron could be expected to counter-attack at dawn, and that the 94th Division could be expected to counter-attack that afternoon. As we did not know just what they expected of us, they must have been disappointed in us when it got to be 15 minutes after dawn before we launched our counter-attack. Accidents will happen.

"WHERE THE HELL ARE THE HEINIES"

Swinging into a new sector of the 3rd Army zone the 3rd Cavalry Squadron took off one morning with a mission of making contact with the enemy. Reconnaissance elements of B and C Troops raced through town after town. Travelling at speeds of 50 or 60 miles per hour, they covered a distance of 85 miles in one morning without ever catching up to any fighting Heinies. The only enemy contact consisted of isolated groups of drooping supermen who were looking for some American unit to which they could surrender. They were merely in the way so they were waved off the roads and left for the doughboys who were following slowly.

These confused characters seemed to be highly offended at the lack of attention paid them by the Cavalrymen. The now familiar white flags had not yet appeared in windows, and placid looking Burghers were still driving their autos on ersatz gas as we went through the towns. The people were stunned, and stood staring in amazement at the confusing picture of the speeding Americans passing German soldiers along the way and merely gesturing them to the rear. They simply stood on the sidewalks with their heads bobbing to and fro, looking like spectators at a ping pong game.

The greatest problem of the day, accord-

ing to Captain Thomas N. Downing, of Newport News, Virginia, was to keep his platoon leaders supplied with new maps every time they ran off the old one.

THE EBENSEE CONCENTRATION CAMP

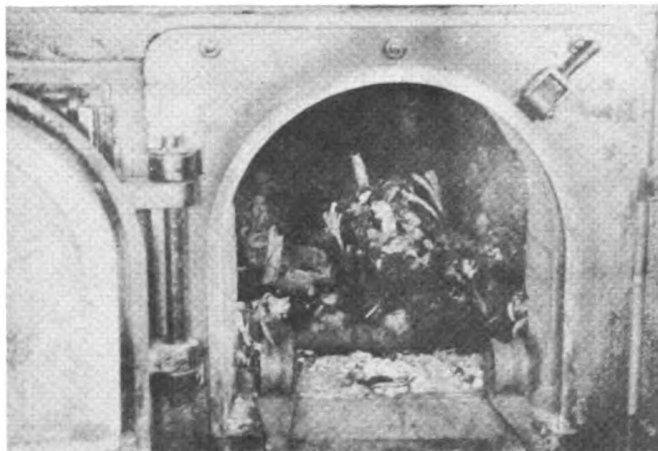
Three days before the end of the war in Europe, the 3rd Cavalry was to witness at first hand one of the most horrible results of Nazism in its conquered countries—the concentration camp.

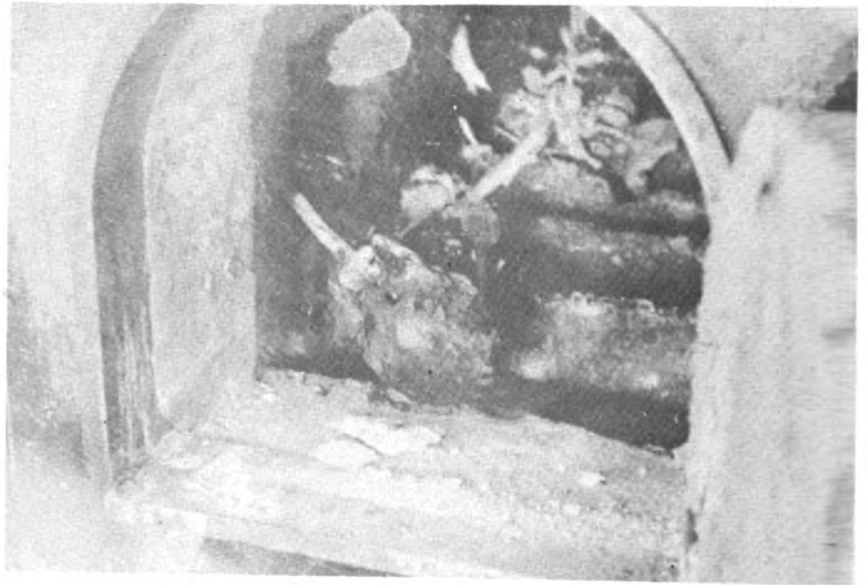
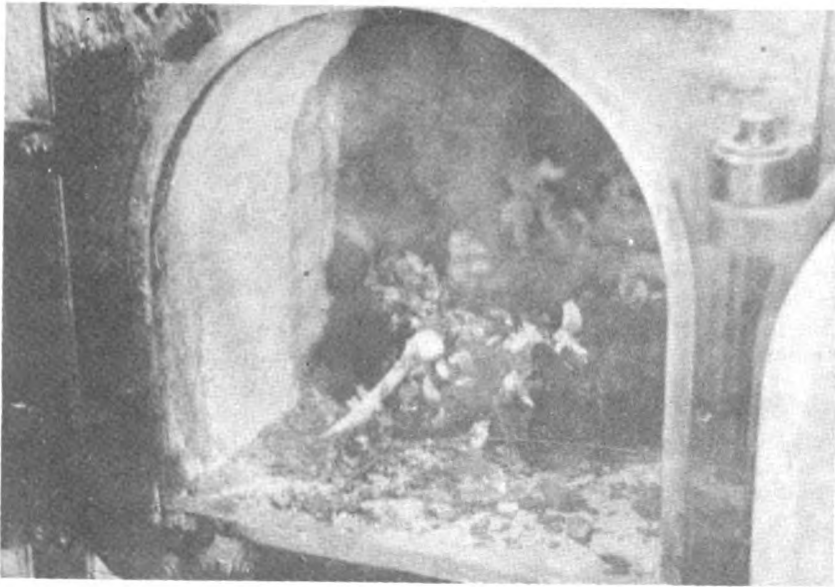
On May 4th "A" troop and a platoon of "F" company were given the mission of cutting into the Austrian Alps. Their route took them south from Gmunden along a beautiful, deep blue lake to its apex at Ebensee. On the outskirts of town, separated from it by a rushing stream, they found the concentration camp.

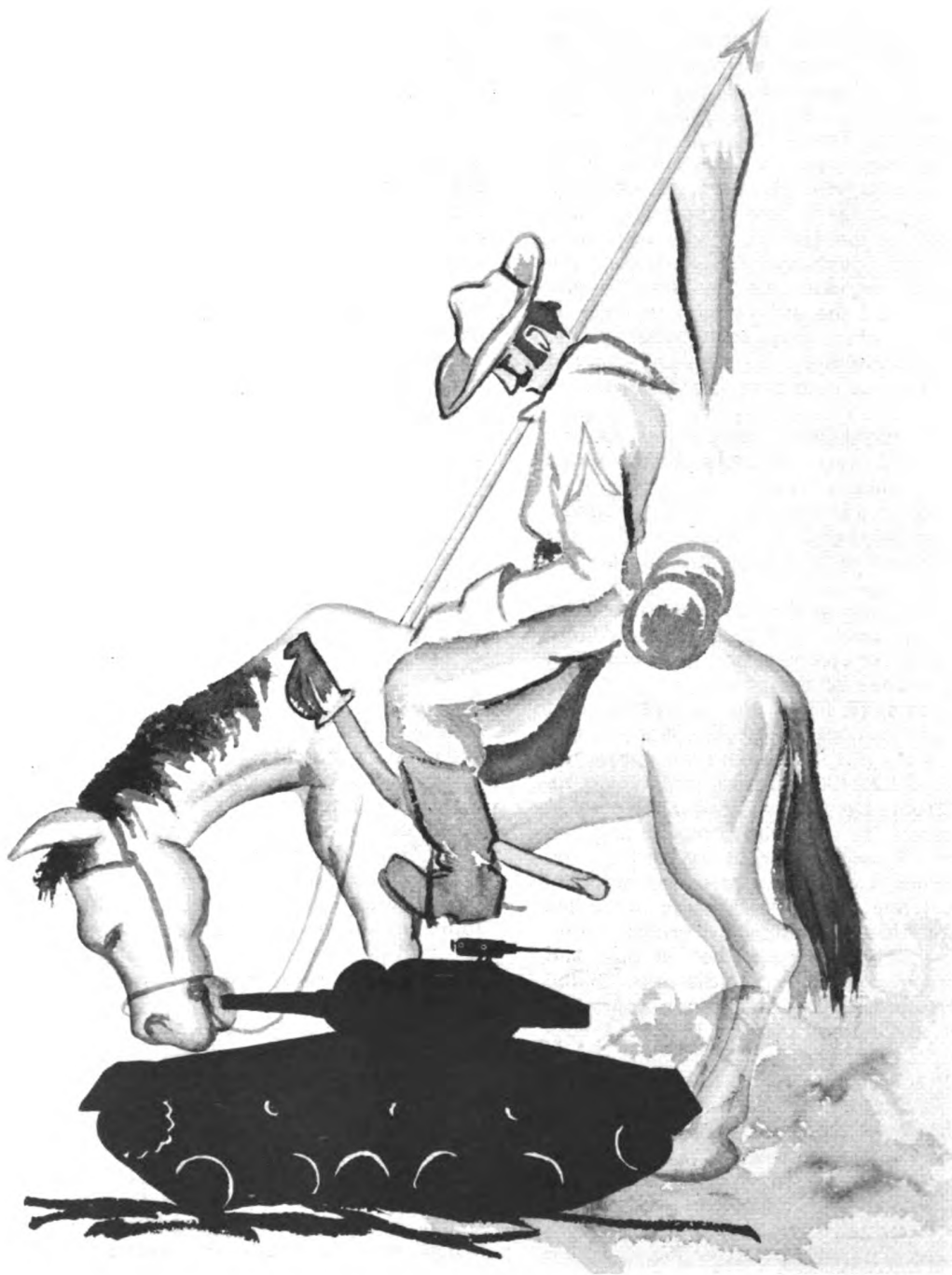
To describe this camp is an impossibility. Words alone cannot begin to tell of the "stink" of decaying human flesh, or of the miserable

condition of the hungry, living mummies who were confined there. The camp, operating on a principle of planned starvation, worked on the assembly line basis. "Enemies" of the Reich entered in comparative good health; were passed from barrack to barrack in successive stages of hunger and finally, too weak to move, were carried to the crematorium. Apparently the crematorium failed to keep up with the death rate for many of the "finished process" barracks were filled with waiting bodies. Still other men, not yet completely starved, were lying in their own filth unable to act differently than emaciated animals. The remaining inmates, resigned to their fate of gnawing pain, milled about the vehicles of the liberating 3rd Cavalry.

No man of the 3rd Cavalry will forget that concentration camp. They will not soon forgive the dainty Frauleins and sedate Burghers who comprised the progressive, educated, "nice" German people, and who lived so close to the camp yet pretended ignorance of its existence.







Troop Histories

HISTORY OF "A" TROOP

Troop "A" moved out from Laval, France, on August 10, 1944 with the mission of reconnoitering in a zone to the East towards Evron, Les Mans, with orders to report strength, composition and disposition of any enemy encountered in the zone. This being the first actual combat for Troop "A", the progress of the unit was very slow in comparison to reconnaissance at a later date, as all members were very conscious of the instructions they had received in the United States regarding "sneaking" and "peeking." At the end of the first day, however, with the 1st and 2nd platoons on line, and the 3rd platoon in reserve, the unit had thoroughly reconnoitered the zone for approximately 20 miles, receiving only a small amount of arm fire suffering no casualties.

The first night was hair-raising as the Troop expended approximately 1000 rounds of small arm ammunition.

Troop "A" continued the mission of reconnaissance at daylight, 11 August 1944, but made no contact with the enemy during the day.

Troop "A" continued these reconnaissance missions daily until 15 August 1944 without receiving any casualties and encountering only small groups of the enemy.

On August 15, 1944, the 1st platoon of the Troop was attached to "B" Troop for a reconnaissance of Paris. Orders, however, were changed at 1100 and the 1st platoon returned to Troop Control at Sarge, France.

On August 16, 1944, the Troop was given the mission of reconnoitering to the East towards Orleans. This mission was accomplished and the Troop went into bivouac two miles Northeast of Orleans where it remained until the morning at which time the 1st and 2nd platoons moved out on reconnaissance to the East and Southeast. The 1st platoon contacted the enemy at Chateau-Dun at 1645 and captured five prisoners.

From the 16th to the 20th of August, 1944, the Troop continued on reconnaissance missions with numerous encounters with the enemy capturing a number of prisoners. On the 21st of August, the Troop received its first casualties when Pfc. Loupe was killed and Sgt. Pryslwki wounded at Sens, France.

From the 22nd of August to the 27th, the Troop continued on reconnaissance missions with few casualties. On the 28th of August, the Squadron was given the mission of seizing and holding any bridges, intact, across the Marne River in the vicinity of Epervy. Troop "A" was given the mission of advance guard. The task force moved out from Nogent at 0930, arrived at Epervy at approximately 1400 after driving through several groups of the enemy. The task force stopped outside to make a reconnaissance of the river, and at this time, it is reported to the head of the

column that the majority of the task force was not following and all that was present was one reconnaissance platoon and part of the command section of the Troop. Knowing that if we delayed moving into the town until the remainder of the task force caught up, the enemy would be set for us, it was decided to move into town with what force we had.

After proceeding into the town about two blocks (running by 88s at the edge of town), the advance elements encountered approximately one Battalion of enemy infantry and approximately 25 enemy vehicles. The fight began!

After knocking out all enemy vehicles with the machine guns and 37s, the enemy infantry became organized in buildings and it was not possible to continue down this street to the bridge. A delaying action was initiated to give time for reconnaissance of another route to the bridge. After a thorough reconnaissance, it was found that only one other street led to the bridge and as far as could be determined, no enemy was covering it, so the task force proceeded to move by this route towards the bridge with the rear elements fighting a delaying action. The unit proceeded for approximately 100 yards when all hell broke loose . . . an unknown number of 88s firing direct-fire at approximately 2000 yards, the second round knocked out the lead A/C and then the enemy proceeded to knock out the rear vehicle. All the other vehicles were abandoned immediately and a withdrawing action began. By the time that the dismounted men were assembled back on the main street, all vehicles had been knocked out. At this time, a check of men disclosed that we had twelve wounded and two killed, leaving approximately 14 men able to continue the fight. The wounded were moved to a civilian house and the remaining group were broken into Squads and took up positions in buildings.

After getting in these positions, the enemy launched an attack on the buildings by a dismounted force which was quickly disposed of. This was about 1600 and at approximately 1800, firing was heard at the western edge of town and proceeded up to the center of town. This we considered to be the 7th Armored Division moving in, so, feeling secure, we decided to post guards and billet for the night which was done and the next morning, contact was made with the 7th Armored Division and transportation was furnished for return of the unit except for the wounded who were evacuated at 2300 the night before.

Troop "A" continued on reconnaissance missions until September 12th. On that date, the 1st platoon set up counter-reconnaissance screen in the vicinity of Arrouville, France. The 2nd platoon set up in the vicinity of Gorze, France. These positions were maintained until September 18th, at which time the Troop CP moved into position, one-half mile North of

Gorze. Two platoons were placed on counter-reconnaissance screen one and one-half mile Northeast of Gorze. The Troop remained in this position with platoons alternating on line every two days until 12 October. On this date the Troop moved to Rangenoux, France, for a three-day rest period. Needless to say, this rest was enjoyed very much.

On the 16th of October, the Troop went back on counter-reconnaissance screen on the Moselle River, in the vicinity of Thionville which was maintained until November 9th, 1944. Very little enemy action was encountered at this time. On November 9th the Troop moved to Wellenstein, Luxembourg and took up positions along the Moselle River, extending from Renick to Beck.

This position was maintained until November 12th when the Troop moved to Hayange and began preparation for movement across the Moselle River. On November 14th, the Troop crossed the Moselle River and took defensive positions in the vicinity of Hunting. On the 15th of November, the 3rd platoon under the command of Lt. Williams, moved out, dismounted and captured Retel, and Sierck without contacting the enemy. On the 16th of November, the 1st and 2nd platoons mounted their vehicles and started reconnaissance to the Northwest. After capturing the town of Merschweiler, Kirsh, Eft and Borg, found themselves knocking on the Siegfried Line on November 19th. On the 21st of November, the Troop was relieved by the 10th Armored Division and moved back to Perl, Germany, for reorganization.

Troop "A" remained between the Moselle and Saar River until approximately the 28th of February, 1945. Maintaining a defensive position with aggressive patrolling.

On February 28th, 1945, the Troop moved to the vicinity of Freudenburg, Germany, remaining in this position until March 3rd. Then the Troop moved across the Saar River and took defensive positions in the vicinity of Irsch, Germany. During this period, 4-5 March, the Troop consolidated their positions by taking the towns of Korlingen and Gutweiler. On the morning of the 6th, the enemy counter-attacked. The attack, preceded by a concentrated artillery barrage, was made by approximately one battalion of German infantry. By 0730 the towns of Gutweiler and Korlingen had been surrounded and were moving into the town of Kirsch. At this time, "F" Company's tanks began moving to break the encirclement of the two forward towns and by 0930 the counter-attack was repulsed with the capture of 82 prisoners and an unknown number dead. The Troop suffered only two casualties which were only slight. The Troop remained in this position until March 10th. On this date, the Troop moved into position in the vicinity of Lastrun, Germany, and remained in position until March 16th. On March 18th, the Troop moved to Trier, as the Squadron was placed in

SHAEF Reserve for a period of two weeks. Vehicles were unlocked and cleaning of equipment was being conducted. At approximately 1600 orders were issued to load and be ready to move at daylight.

On March 19th the Troop moved South with the mission of protecting the right flank of XX Corps and making contact with the enemy. The mission was completed on the 20th of March when the Troop contacted the 7th Army in the vicinity of Hamburg, Germany. After this mission, the Squadron was placed in reserve and Troop "A" was given the mission of guarding PWs at Kaiserslautern until March 25th.

On the 26th of March the Troop moved towards Mainz to be ready to cross the Rhine River as soon as bridges were completed. On the 29th, the rat race began with "A" Troop spearheading (exploiting the break-through). This mission continued until April 1st with a great number of prisoners and "loot" taken. On this date the Troop arrived in Rotenburg, Germany and found the bridges across the river blown. The Troop remained until the engineers completed the bridges on the 25th of April. On this date the race began again and continued until May 6th on which date the boys found themselves in the vicinity of Ebensee, Austria, where they remained until the 28th of May.

The Troop remained in the foothills of the Alps until June 13th when they started their journey towards the beaches of France and finally, the United States . . . July 12th, with the feeling of having completed their mission.



Pauly, Bennett, Baker, Biggins,
Warchol, Hotsam



Cumbo



Sgts. Gritzmacher, Lamel, and Bertsch



Lt. Callahan



Papalardo



L. to R.—McManus, Ekis, Gwinn, Funtsh. Kneeling: Sanck, Hill, and Ropp



Van Order



Stansbury, Ackler, Kranik, Murphy



Jabalonski



"A" Troop



Musengo



Graham and Tichenor



Balser, Gritzmacher



Lt. Nault



Fishman



Baker



Gormely, Baker



Van Order



Landphere



Capt. Howk



Janssen



Veracruz



Egler and Musengo



Voorhies, Knorr



Karkashian



**Dowell, Michon, Bennett, Polakwicz,
Pritt.**



Lt. Weber



Senck, Moody



Lt. Nault, Marlowe



Fishman



Morse, Buono, Lingerfeld



Eggler, Riley



Lt. Eddy



L. to R.—Gritzmacher, Lamee, Dowel, Jones, and Simmons



Morse, Buono



Capt. Howk



Sgt. Nestrick



**Kraynik, Branham, Sowins, Laich,
Santoro, Lacava, Standberry**



Kranc



Bernard G. Hauber



**Webb, Jones, Dowel, Simmons,
and Vercrusey**

HISTORY OF "B" TROOP

Commanded by Capt. Ivan L. McCracken who was capably assisted by NCOs of the highest quality "B" Troop jumped off in Normandy to strike terror to the heart of every Kraut. Equipped in England to fight in a fast moving situation, they were well prepared for the action they encountered.

It was the 11th of August when the first Germans died as result of "B" Troop guns; just east of Mortigne, France, near Jublians. In this action two men were hurt, several Krauts killed and no prisoners were taken. Not much was accomplished in the loss and gain columns but the men knew War had actually started. They were in the fight, the salt water out of their gun barrels, for longer and greater conquests.

A matter of only four or five days after the troop's initial action every man was a veteran, a seasoned soldier. They proved this many times in a very few weeks. Their move onto Orleans is one example and the drive to Sens another.

The drive to Sens started at 0300 21 August. The mission was to secure the bridge at Sens a distance of 70 miles into enemy-held France. By evening of the 21st the 3rd Squadron with "B" Troop in the lead pulled up in the newly established bridge head over the Yonne river.

From here in successive leaps and scraps such famous places as Epernay, Verdun and Thionville were chalked up as being reconnoitered first by this hard hitting organization.

"B" Troop finally had to halt in front of the impregnable forts of Metz, and the heavily defended Moselle river.

It was while here on the outer rim of Metz that Lt. Clark T. Baldwin assumed command of the Troop.

After an unsuccessful attack on Arnville, due to a large concentration of the enemy at this crossing of the Moselle, "B" Troop withdrew to the Squadron assembly area near Chambley, later moving with the Squadron on a counter-reconnaissance mission before the Moselle forts. "B" Troop sector fronted the fortress Driant, and opposed the Germans on what had been their Infantry Officer Training Grounds. After spending almost a month under very difficult combat conditions, often forced to exist in a defensive position with water up to their necks in foxholes the Squadron was relieved and reported to the 3rd Cavalry Group farther north.

After a short rest at Cluange, "B" Troop moved to the defensive area around Richmond defending on the Moselle River. The Troop occupied this position until the end of October. They ran counter-reconnaissance patrols every night, often capturing enemy personnel. Also to harass the enemy as much as possible, they set up a battery of 37 mm guns fired from armored cars which drove several enemy

artillery pieces out of action. These guns firing indirectly employed by competent observers, did considerable damage.

From the middle of October to the 9th of November, the Troop maintained a defensive position west of the Moselle in the vicinity of Ebange a little north of Richmond. On the 14th of November the 3rd Army crossed the Moselle, "B" Troop as its mission required, crossed the river in darkness and moved to a hotly contested position east of Hunting. Relieving the 90th Infantry Division in this sector, they moved forward to Koenigsburg Farm. During the next few days they were subjected to heavy artillery fire in this sector. On the third day however, they advanced with the rest of the Squadron, exploited the situation to the portion of the Siegfried Line extending from the Saar River to the Moselle through Obertunsdorf, Borg, Tettinggen and Nennig they attacked this line unsuccessfully for it was heavily defended. "B" Troop remained in this position for a week. During this time many reconnaissance patrols were run in order to determine the best methods of attacking the German positions. (This operation mentioned in "Time.")

The 10th Armored Division, in order to make an attack, which proved unsuccessful relieved our unit and allowed us to have a much appreciated Thanksgiving dinner at Perl.

Soon however the Troop moved into Berg and remained in this position conducting an effective artillery offensive during the Bulge, despite reports of large numbers of the enemy descending upon them. Although constant reports of enemy attacks were received during this period the Troops beat off numerous enemy patrols and in daring patrols of their own captured important enemy personnel.

After spending a very quiet Christmas in this position, the Troop moved to new defensive positions in the Saar River with the command post in Fitten. The Troop remained in this position living in as pleasant a manner as possible compatible with severe winter conditions. The snow was often as deep as three to four feet. Several reconnaissance patrols were sent across the Moselle into the heavily defended area around Merzig.

During the last few days of February the Troop crossed the Saar at Saarburg and pushed forward to an offensive on the Ruwer river. Several men were lost on vigorous exploitations of this position, and enemy artillery was particularly heavy. Often a barrage of screaming mimis, moaning mimis and 250 mm high explosive shells would land within a minute. Due to heavy German defenses east of the Ruwer, our forces held this line while other units of the Third Army attacked Trier. This caused the withdrawal of the enemy and the Squadron soon moved to new positions north of this town here, during the early days of March, "B" Troop moved in

continuous attack upon the enemy held towns of Kenn, Longuich and Riol which led to the final bloody, but successful attack on the hill north of Riol on March 16th.

28 March 1945—At this time the outfit was assigned the relatively easy and restful mission of protecting the approaches to the tactical bridge across the Rhine River. The troop CP and the third platoon were on the west bank in the city of Mainz, deployed along the river, firing at anything and everything that flowed down the river. The 2nd platoon was deployed on the east bank while the 1st platoon occupied an island in the middle of the river protecting all approaches to the tactical bridgehead. Nothing exciting happened so the troops had an opportunity for some much needed recuperation after their terrible jolt at Riol Hill.

We stayed here for several days, while the rest of the Squadron left Mainz for new and daring missions leading ultimately to our terrorizing strike at Kassel.

30 March 1945—Finally on the morning of March 30th we received the order to "Be mounted and ready to pull out at 0500:" This order concerned only the 1st and 2nd platoons as the 3rd was to remain at their outposts on the river until later in the day. Our point crossed the Rhine River at exactly 0630 and shot northwest toward the town of Alsfeld. It was a distance of 85 miles and we arrived there at 2400. We were on the alert throughout the day, but there were no engagements with the exception of minor sniper fire. The 3rd platoon was relieved about 1700 and made the crossing a few hours later. They made the same road march to Alsfeld.

31 March 1945—This morning we got a new mission. On our road march to Ersrode we encountered and captured several snipers. During the road march the troop captured 204 German soldiers and evacuated them to a nearby PWE. During the course of the afternoon, several sections of the troop were separated from the main body and went directly through strong enemy positions in nearby woods. Their vehicles were loaded to the extreme with PWs, which very probably accounted for the fact that they were not fired upon. However, other elements of the Troop encountered heavy enemy machine gun and sniper fire. That evening, incidently Easter Eve, the Troop withdrew, while infantry was brought up to clean out groups of enemy that began infiltrating late that afternoon.

1 April 1945—Today the Troop moved on line from Keenefeld to Niebereidenbach with very little enemy activity. Four prisoners were captured. The next few days were spent moving from town to town feeling our way forward, until finally the Troop outposted several towns surrounding the large city of Kassel. Several enemy air bursts were received by small numbers of our detached vehicles, plus a little sniper fire, but no major fighting took

place. All this time, prisoners kept filing into our lines. Many were old degraded souls pulled from their homes then thrown into the Volkstrum (Peoples Army) as a front for the retreating Wehrmacht.

The following day the Troop, after having reconnoitered the surrounding territory, moved into Kassel. Here the 1st and 2nd platoons went into the line and encountered strong enemy resistance consisting primarily of 88s with supporting infantry. The Troop rejoined here for the night, receiving periodic air bursts and anti-tank fire.

The following days were devoted to our stab southward toward Weimar in fact, this was the beginning of the Third Army's drive southward and across the Danube River, ending with the termination of the war in Austria.

The war now was fast and success depended upon how efficiently we could move through enemy territory, striking terror into the hearts of both enemy soldiers and civilians. So day after day we would move fast and furiously from town to town, linking far flung units and moulding the spearhead that finally stabbed and killed the enemy.

During our drive we not only fought and endured the hardships offered only in war, but opportunity fell to us to visit, however through the business end of the gun, several points of considerable interest. The fact remained still that our mission was not an educational one, so these points failed to impress the men in that sense. A point of considerable interest to me was the town of Weimar, Germany. As we arrived there, it struck me that this was the site of the old Weimar Republic that proved such a farce after World War I. The Troop spent the night of April 5th here.

From here we continued our mission of clearing out and holding towns, always moving farther south. The Troop was extremely successful in these numerous exploits of capturing, disarming and evacuating hundreds of prisoners with few casualties suffered in our own ranks. The loyalty and courage shown throughout the Squadron and their daring and unhesitating stabs, many times far behind enemy lines, well justified our name "Task Force Polk."

As we arrived in the territory closer to southern Germany and in the vicinity of the towns of Bad Kosen, Droybig, and Kraftsolf, on the dates of April 13, 14, and 15. Our mission was to protect and outpost the southern flank of the 20th Corps. During this time prisoners continued to flow in throughout the days and nights following.

Finally, on April 17th 1945, we were relieved of our mission with the XX Corps and moved into the town of Meerain, Germany. Here our particular Troop had an extremely interesting experience that the fortunes of the war happened to bring to us. We captured a wine-brandy distillery intact in keeping with the finest tradition of the military service!

This gave us all the opportunity to relax and enjoy a well earned short rest. The men took full advantage of this opportunity and loaded their vehicles to the limit with the cherished beverage. In fact, they "liberated" enough to last us until the final ending of the war. Please rest assured that the parties were many and all were gay that evening of April 17, 1945. The guard however was not relaxed and within 36 hours the men were fully ready to continue their part in Germany's death-march. As a matter of fact, incidents such as this were an inspiration which is well indicated by the fact that on April 19th, just two days later, Troop "B" moved a distance of 160 miles.

We arrived at the town of Friehe, capturing several prisoners on the way. The next day we again moved and occupied the town of Hage. We had returned to our mission of guarding the flank of the XX Corps. From here we went to Hirschbach and awaited further orders.

22 April 1945—Here we were poised for what proved to be one of the finest Cavalry maneuvers in history. Our mission was to capture bridges across three rivers, final destination the Danube River, and if possible to make contact with the Russian Army that was believed to have been in the vicinity.

During the night the platoon commander and Troop commander were called together with much "to do" and early in the morning the 5th Ranger Battalion joined us to form our task force. That morning at 0600 we had the mission explained to us and it was definitely made clear that resistance could be expected and to be alert now, if ever. The Troop departed Hirschbach at 0730, the 1st platoon running the point all day we made our own roads traveling cross-country. Our chief foe now was the weather, it was a cold rainy day which didn't at all add to our success. Finally in the afternoon we struck the town of Burgenfeld with lightning fury that would have made Old Jeb Stuart himself proud to bear the name "Brave Rifles". We were now 40 miles behind the German lines, in fact, we made a joke out of the fact that there were more Heinies behind us than in front. This day however, we captured two bridges intact, over three hundred prisoners, killed a large number of German soldiers, destroyed two horse-drawn artillery pieces and occupied the town during the night. The Germans here were so dumb-founded that during the night an enemy scout car came directly into the middle of the city under the impression that they were well under the protection of their front, which they believed was forty miles away. They, however, were sent promptly to their ancestors by 50 caliber machine gun fire.

The following day the Troop left and reconnoitered towns and roads east and south, final objective Regensburg. Being well into Nazi territory, prisoners were flowing in hordes. 350 were captured this day.

26 April 1945—This day we finally arrived on the banks of the Danube River. The platoons were sent out to find a place to cross the river. A patrol of rangers and several men from our 3rd platoon ran a patrol to the middle of the river on an island just across from Straubing, which was held by the enemy. The town Burgermeister was willing to surrender the town but promptly the military commander wheeled up and made it definitely known that he was in command and that Straubing would be defended. All the while we could see snipers being placed in Red Cross towers throughout the city, so knowing where our bread was buttered, we withdrew and rejoined our troops. That night several artillery shells were lobbed in on us from this town; one of them hit within ten yards of the Troop CP, crippling a bantam and driving the Troop headquarters into the basement and lower floor for the night. During the day, however, our mission was not successful in that all bridges were found to be blown and no likely spot to cross the Danube had as yet been found. The platoons withdrew and awaited orders for our crossing that did become a reality the following day. On April 27th we received orders to cross the Danube in the vicinity of Kirchtrath. One section was left to guard gas barges that were found tied up along the river. This made the boys a little shaky because it proved the fact that the Heinies were prepared to use poison gas in the event they might deem it necessary. However, none of it was released. The following day, the 28th of April, we crossed the Danube and continued our mission to protect the flank of the 71st Infantry Division. All of this was in the vicinity of Regensburg which fell to the United States after quite a little shelling and street fighting on or about these last few dates mentioned.

For weeks after this daring dash to and across the Danube River, the 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron received the praise of the entire Army coming all of the way down from General Patton himself. No history of the war in Europe will ever be complete if full account of this mission and credit for it is not properly bestowed therein.

On the 4th of May, 1945 we began what was to be perhaps one of the most daring and hazardous missions of this war. It was our spearhead into Austria which brought about the final culmination of the war.

On this date we received the order to cross the Inn River and attempt once more to contact the Russians. We were working closely with Troop A, who met heavy resistance in bazooka and small arms fire in the vicinity of Voklebruk. Contact was not made however with the Russians, but our unit was extremely successful in capturing and disarming a complete division of prisoners. That night was spent in Seewalchen where one unfortunate member of Hitler's Volkstrum was eliminated by a short burst from one 50 cal.



Andorf



Jorgenson



Fornoff, Koenig, Kluck, Kidd, Danino,
Schmitz, Moore, Stewart, 2nd Section
1st Platoon



Lt. Jackson, Lt. Richards



Lt. Cody

machine gun manned by an extremely alert sentry.

The next morning, the 5th of May to be exact, was really the beginning of the final and daring drive spoken of here a few lines previously.

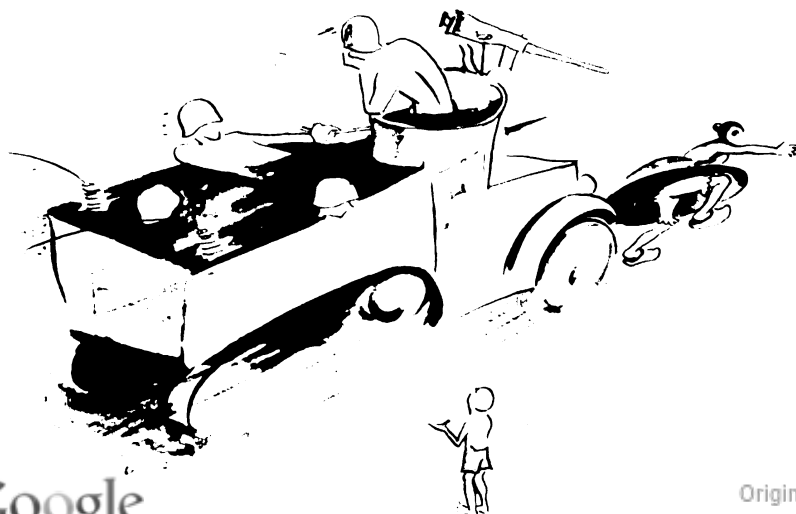
The Troop left Seewalchen at 0630. We were at the point of the entire Squadron with Colonel Wallach and Captain Baldwin, "B" Troop Commander, in the third vehicles from the front. That day we went through an entire SS division with, and fortunately, very few shots fired. Our success this day I think was due primarily to several of many definite reasons. First of all, I believe the enemy was utterly bewildered at the fact when they saw that we were practically through and beyond their unit. In other words, when the fact that we were extremely bold and aggressive Americans directly in their midst became a reality to them it was really too late to take effective action. Also due credit should and is given to the courageous men in the point bantam that day who expertly and boldly kept moving forward, and all the while were telling the SS troopers, "KRIEG IST FERTIG."

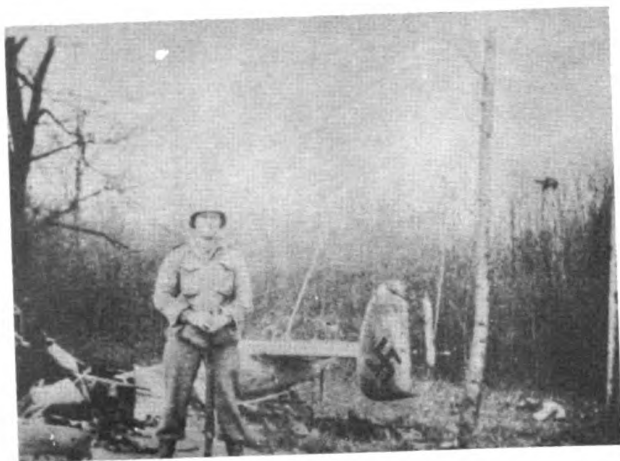
We moved from Steyr to the small towns of Ebensee and Traunkirchen, Austria, where again 4,500 enemy SS and Wehrmacht troopers surrendered. But the main event that will always remain in our memories was the liberation of the Ebensee Concentration Camp. The unpleasantness of such an institution has been certainly publicized enough by both authorities who have been prisoners in camps and also by those who our friend Mauldin calls "Garitroopers", who fight the war from Times Square. Nevertheless, some vivid characterizations have been publicized, which

makes it unnecessary for me to attempt to touch your sympathies by only repeating what others have said.

For the next week or so our unit was primarily engaged in occupying and clearing the vicinity of Ebensee. Patrols were running through and around the Camp and up into the Alps. SS troopers each day would filter down and give themselves up to us mainly, I think, for protection against the liberated prisoners from the camp. Our main duties at this time consisted primarily of outposting roads, and road junctions, and apprehending enemy soldiers posing as civilians. Very little violent enemy activity was reported because now, technically, the war was over and violence from the enemy now would be a crime and punished as such. This, with the exception of a short little jaunt up into the Alps on a supposed mission to check our friend, Marshal Tito, whom we never met, marked the ending of our function as a unit against the forces of the 3rd German Reich in this World War. From this time until we reached the United States our duties were chiefly recreational, which indeed we duly earned.

In summary I might add that regardless of what particular troop the 3rd Cavalry might be in, to be member of its ranks and bear the name "Brave Rifles" is as fine a tribute and honor as could be paid to anyone called into our country's service and are fortunate enough to be chosen to fill the ranks of our distinguished unit, theirs is a great heritage and in order to keep our name sheathed in glory, they must devote themselves completely to duty in order to live up to the standards laid down for them.





Kearns



B Troop firing mortar on Moselle



Toth and Fiss



Lt. Jackson



1st Platoon B Troop



Orofino



Negro



Krept — Murphy



S/Sgt. Baker



Lt. Richards
Original from

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



Norton, Hedrick



Gean



Walther, Bommarito



Pvt. Pumbo



Jackson, Morgan, Sorenson



Burr



Cavanaugh



Gen. Patton presents Silver Star to Lyle R. Silvernail, May 19, 1945



Gibson, Danino, Cavanaugh, Drummond



B Troop — Relaxing



Webb, Gibson, Burns, Lang



Capt. Baldwin



Agee



Wenger, Kreft



Grahovac



Standing—Sgt. Stackhouse, Kneeling—
First Sgt. Bauman, Sgt. Baker

Hartrick, Baker, Gibson, Hickman,
Bleich (Standing)



L. O. Boughton



T/5 Frank Blossen



Marvin



Torrence



Nussbaum



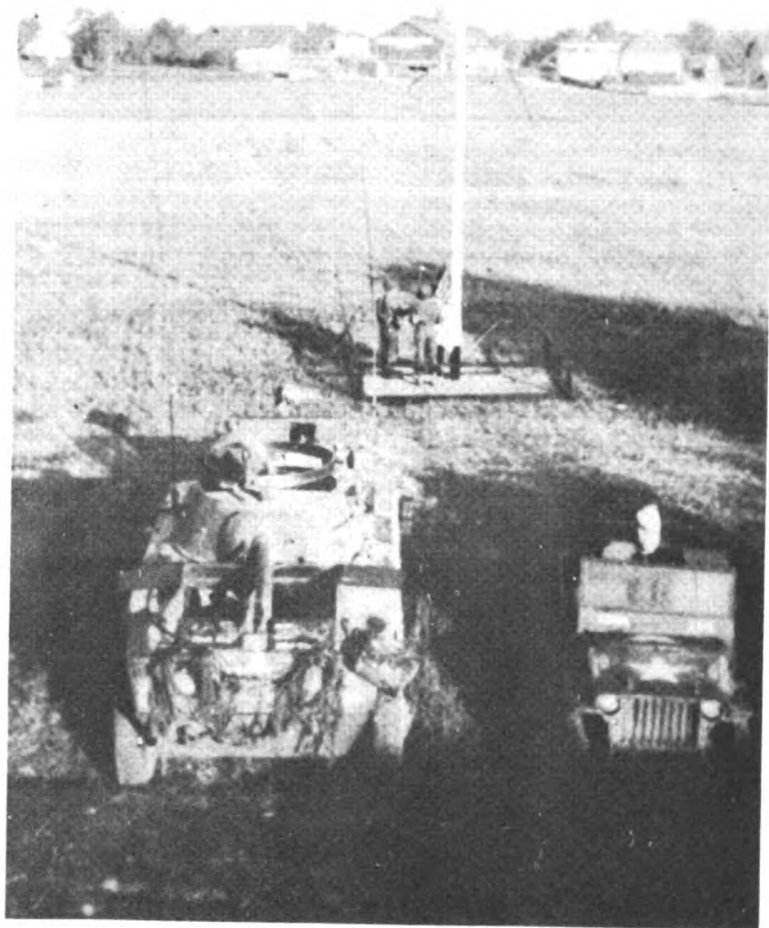
Webb, Cavanaugh, Hartrick, Lewnes,



L. to R.—Drummond, Webb, Boughton,
and Dechant



Lewis, Grantz, Hall



Andorf-Austria

THE HISTORY OF "C" TROOP

"C" Troop's first experience in combat was mainly one of security. As is true of all green troops, our first night was hair-raising even though no contact was made with the enemy. Who knows how many rounds were fired at such night noises as grasshoppers, birds, rabbits and plain nothing at all! We had no casualties! The next morning, the third platoon was sent on reconnaissance north-eastward from Mayenne, but was repulsed by enemy anti-tank fire which killed the platoon sergeant, Sgt. Franey. If the men in the point bantam had not been alert, perhaps the entire platoon would have been lost. The same day, a new direction was tried which called for the entire troop to proceed north. Again we were stopped, this time by a roadblock before the hill-top town of Jublains. The casualties caused by an attempt to remove the roadblock totaled seven men. We ended the day, not with a tactical success, but at least with a feeling under our belts of being combat-experienced troops. The next day we started off again, not to be stopped until—but that's getting ahead of the story.

Our next important mission was one of reconnaissance in which the second and third platoons participated—the first platoon being held in reserve as their ranks were sorely depleted from their first mission. Orders were issued not to fire a shot unless it became absolutely necessary. The second platoon encountered some opposition which resulted in five casualties and the loss of three bantams. Among the casualties was the platoon leader, Lt. McLaughlin. The third platoon encountered no opposition. For the next few days, it was mostly touch and go with the enemy, capturing and killing a few, but mostly keeping right on their tails, and liberating more territory.

Liberating French towns was really a pleasant occupation. Before entering these towns, they appeared to be entirely vacated except for a few stray dogs and wandering chickens. Even after we were in the town, it seemed deserted, until perhaps, one brave "frenchy" would discover that we were American troops. Almost at once, we would be surrounded by hordes of people shouting "Americans". Flowers, "cidre", and wine would be offered to us to show their gratitude, although the sight of so many happy people was reward enough for us. About this time, somebody would pull out a map, and start asking questions as to where "Le Boche" was. Immediately, the map would be yanked from his hands and a French council of war would develop around it, appearing somewhat like a dice game with the same hand waving, pointing and arguing. Always "Le Boche" was very close and in every direction. On to the next town!

On the fifteenth of August, the troop headed for a rendezvous at Orleans. The Free

French had one of their vehicles leading us with the first platoon right behind them. About ten miles outside of Chateaudun, in a driving rainstorm, we ran into a German convoy of tanks and infantry. They were as startled as we were, but we got in the first shots. Two bantams put up a cross fire that cut them down on both sides, keeping them pretty busy and allowing most of the platoon to get away except for the point bantam, which was stopped. Both the driver and the gunner were killed. The lead armored car was knocked out, but all the crew got out and returned within a few days. The rest of the platoon was held up inside enemy territory for that night, and the next day, made a dash back to the rest of the troop.

We continued on to Orleans, where the platoons were broken up in sections and sent out, either on missions of reconnaissance, or as listening posts. In this sector, we had our first contact with enemy aircraft, it gave us a very helpless feeling. Soon afterwards, the third platoon was sent out on a mission to St. Menehold. Lt. Baldwin was put in charge of this mission as the regular platoon leader was in the hospital. No opposition was encountered until we reached the outskirts of the town. Two enemy aircraft appeared at tree-top level however, and scared the pants off of us. Just after the planes had left, two Germans on motorcycles appeared at the head of the column waving a white flag. They appeared to be Free French, and we let them get right on top of us before we realized that they weren't! By then, it was too late; they stepped on the gas and got away. As we later found out, these Germans brought in reinforcements which consisted of two 75s and some foot troops. We went into town, but found we couldn't get out the other side because of an enemy outpost. When we turned around to go back, we ran into the 75s. After knocking out both of them, we advanced toward the rear in a hurry. In this encounter we lost one section sergeant, Sgt. Cholipsky, who was considered missing for about four weeks, but later we found out that he had been picked up by the 7th Armored Division.

From there, the second platoon went on a road reconnaissance mission between Provins and Nogent. The platoon was split in two sections. The platoon sergeant's section was reconnoitering certain roads when they found themselves trapped between dug-in anti-tank guns and a horse-drawn German convoy which had pulled out on the road behind them after they had passed. While trying to shoot their way through the convoy, the armored car was hung up on a German ammo cart. Before they decided to burn and abandon the vehicle, they had accounted for more than a hundred killed or wounded, mainly through the shooting of the armored car gunner, T/5 Petrillo. The rest of the platoon piled on the two remaining bantams and made a daring

escape from that trap after leaving approximately 150 prisoners behind, with their mouths open at the thought of not being captured. The other section of the platoon, while trying to get to this section, ran into the rear-end of the convoy and managed to knock out an 88 in the process. In these encounters, the casualties amounted to two wounded and one missing. Vehicles lost included one armored car and two bantams.

The missions after that were mainly reconnaissance, with little trouble. We by-passed Paris and Reims and went on to Verdun, where we assisted in taking the city and clearing the area along the Meuse between Verdun and St. Mihiel. That night, Verdun was bombed, and it looked just like the 4th of July with all the flak and tracers flying around. It really was an experience. We then crossed the Meuse and continued on.

The next important mission for the troop was a fighting mission. The troop, with "E" Troop's assault guns and other attachments, was sent out to take Fort Driant. The assault guns were set in position and commenced firing on the fort. We could not observe the results of the shelling: but, undoubtedly, the shells were bouncing off the Fort. Needless to say, this mission was not successful. We suffered a few casualties when the Germans returned fire on us. The enemy artillery fire forced us to withdraw from our position. Later, three Infantry divisions were used to take Ft. Driant and Metz.

After the attempt on Fort Driant, we withdrew to a position in the rear to rest and replenish our supplies and personnel. While on this short rest period, the RED CROSS girls came up with their doughnuts and a movie. After we received and assigned our replacements, we started out on what proved to be more of an infantry than a cavalry mission.

Our mission was to watch the draw between Gravelotte and Gorze near the fortified city of Metz. We were in this position for approximately five weeks. We had several minor skirmishes with the enemy and sent out numerous patrols to reconnoiter hostile activities. Our patrols that went out on top of the hills could observe the forts around Metz.

The rendezvous in the draw was nerve-racking at night. Innumerable noises had our men jumpy, and on one or two occasions, machine gun firing was going on at intervals all night. On a few occasions, the enemy sent small patrols into our lines in daylight. One morning a German officer surprised one of our jeep patrols when he stepped out of the edge of the woods to observe our activities. Our patrol was so surprised that the officer calmly walked away. He is probably still chuckling over that one. The worst thing we had to contend with was the weather. A great deal of rain made living miserable and traction poor. We were very glad when we were relieved at the end of thirty-seven days.

After we were relieved at Gravelotte; we went back to rest for a couple of days. Then, we were assigned to help watch enemy activity along the Moselle River. We maintained a constant alert in the daytime and at night, made contact patrols with other troops in the Squadron. We kept watch at Richemont, Thionville and other small towns. Although all we did was run patrols along the river and pull guard, life was never dull. We always had something to keep us busy. There were many stories which the men like to tell which had their origin in the Thionville area. Some of them should perhaps be included here. Captain Downing's favorite was the one in which S/Sgt. Swift was seen racing along in a jeep accompanied by two French girls while German M. G. bullets were clipping over their heads. The schoolhouse, which provided billets for some of the troops, also provided a number of good stories. And then, there was the time that Lt. Wood came out of his CP dressed in a French "gay nineties" costume of tails, white tie, top hat and came to greet some inspecting brass. Needless to say, the inspection proved a complete flop and Wood was made to feel the powers of being strictly G.I.

One of the toughest assignments we had while in this area was to run a patrol across the river. The detail chosen for the patrol consisted of Lt. Boren, Finney, Emmerton, Shanken and Wood. One of the French Maquis showed them a spot where he had crossed, but it was seen that the Germans had since covered the spot with a machine gun. "Hank" decided that a better crossing could be made further down the river. While the patrol crossed the 3rd platoon acted as a covering force on our side of the river. The men were stationed to aid the patrol's return in case they started to drift in the swift current. The mission was one of those "prisoners for Group" details which we learned to dread in the coming months. It was decided to wait at a crossroads and ambush a stray vehicle or some careless Kraut guard. At 0300 no prisoners having been taken, coming daylight forced the patrol to return. Upon approaching our bank, they noticed a rubber boat drawn up on the bank which had not been there originally. They landed and saw three foreign figures approaching who had on S. S. Capes. After a cautious "Handehoch" by one of our patrol, the figures opened fire, followed immediately by our fire. When the smoke cleared, three S. S. men lay dead and Shanken had been wounded. The end of another night's work!

From Thionville we went to Luxembourg and held the line along the Moselle up there. There we got a lot of pretty close and accurate shelling that started to get on the fellow's nerves. We were all snapping at each other and cursing the luck that had brought us to such a God-forsaken spot as this. The 1st pla-

toon had a mined hill on which they had to stay to prevent patrols from penetrating. The only way to get supplies and ammo up to them was to bring it up by hand during the night. Every time a head appeared in daylight the enemy threw over a few shells.

Then orders came for us to cross the Moselle River, which we knew so well—from our side. As is always true of our movements, we crossed in the murky darkness which it seems only exists in the ETO. After making a slow and uncertain road march the vehicles were left scattered in a patch of woods, and we proceeded on foot to relieve an infantry unit. It was so dark that the men were forced to walk in single file with hands on each other's shoulders. Even after this precaution, the platoons arrived at their positions only to find half the men had been lost, and equipment was scattered from the bottom of the hill to the top. To add to our misery, there were numerous dead Heinies lying among our positions. Came the dawn and many men found their foxholes already had occupants in the form of exterminated Germans. Cpl. Bucci awoke to find his nose not two inches from a very dead German, who, during the night, had provided the "log" for Bucci's seat. Lt. Wood and Sgt. Vang spent the entire day digging a super deluxe foxhole—so—that evening we were relieved of our mission. What a relief to return to the luxuries of our vehicles!

We made good use of our vehicles the next few days knifing toward the German border. Finally, on the morning of November 17th, Lt. Boren and the 2nd platoon were chosen for a history-making mission—to be the first troops of the 3rd Army to enter the Nazi's homeland. Later that morning, the news was radioed back to the Troop CP, that the 2nd had crossed into Germany in the vicinity of Apach. Another first for the 3rd! Our elation was dimmed by the news that Hank Boren had been seriously wounded.

During the next three days, we worked our way deeper into German territory before being stopped at Besch by the famous Siegfried Line. It was here at Besch that we started our long cold winter siege of the "line" which took us from the Moselle River-end to the Saar River-end. Besch, Wochern, Tettingen, Borg, Hellendorf (where Lt. Hennessy was Burgo-meister and Gates was chief cook and bottle-washer) Bethingen, Nohn and Driesbach were all occupied by "C" Troop at different times during the winter months.

Who in "C" Troop will ever forget Tettingen and its "beautiful" surroundings—the trench with a foot of mucky water at the bottom into which we gladly pushed our faces while both friendly and enemy shells competed for the privilege of using the air over our heads—those wrecked houses which seemed so safe until Jerry dropped a few mortar shells around just to let us know he didn't appreciate

our being there,—that damned sniper who used to play his shots off the wall of the house across the street and carom them into the doorway of the CP,—that alley commonly known as the "bowling alley", which used to echo to the "merry" tune of 88s or those pill-boxes that gave us a feeling of being trapped in a coffin without being dead? What a relief to blow those babies back to the Germans, and pull back to the comparative comforts of Wochern. And the Salt Mill with Driesbach added! — Why the Heinies never blew that old mill out of the valley is still a mystery. Have to give them some credit, for they tried twice daily, but only succeeded in cutting our network of wires in several places. We had more wires there than a good telephone company. How many times did we pussy-foot into Driesbach; act like the little men who weren't there, and then pussy-foot back to the Salt Mill? Who knows but that the Germans sat in those pillboxes across the Saar and died laughing at our secrecy. Probably they would have died sooner if they had known the power that was in back of us during the Battle of the Bulge—two M.P.s warming their hands at a crossroad, 13 miles to our rear.

It was along this same line that we first began to enjoy a few slight morsels of the fortunes of war, living in German houses of our choosing, working labor gangs of civilians in an effort to clean up the stinking carcasses of pigs and horses, tossing dirty dishes out the window and starting on a new set, capturing cattle with definite Nazi tendencies and frying delicious steaks of definite American tenderness in Novak's short order kitchen. Yes, at times, the war was not too horrible.

As on the Moselle River, it was finally found necessary to send a patrol across the Saar. Lt. McCreary and Cpl. Greenstein were the ones that were to make this fateful trip behind the German lines. It was decided that once across the river, their biggest problem would be to keep from getting lost in the dense forests. In order to prevent this, the artillery was to fire high airbursts over Merzig and Besseringen on every even hour. This would allow the patrol to locate itself by resection. It was further decided that two pigeons would be carried by the patrol in order to establish one-way communication. Both members of the patrol were flown over the area, which they were to traverse, in a liaison plane of the attached artillery battalion. Lt. McCreary, aided by the photo interpretation officer, also made a thorough study of aerial photographs of the section. When they finally reached the opposite bank they had to cut their way through barbed wire entanglements. After they got through that hazard, they continued on their mission. It seemed that every few feet there was a German sentry. This kept up for several days and nights. They finally worked their way back to the river's edge to meet our forces that would carry them back

to safety. After giving the pre-arranged signal, they lay in wait for the boat to reach them. They then observed a man creeping toward them. When challenged in English several times, he failed to answer and continued to advance. Believing that they were being surrounded, the patrol fired on the man and plunged into the river. Upon reaching the west bank, Cpl. Greenstein found that Lt. McCreary had not crossed. Greenstein met members of the contact party and they started patrolling the bank for McCreary. They never did find him until April. He got hung up on some barbed wire in the river and had been captured. The man that had been killed turned out to be of our own men, Pfc. Stackpole, who had crossed with Cpl. Williams. As happens many times in war, a costly mistake had been made which could not have been foreseen.

Our next phase of operations, which carried us across the Saar and on to the Rhine, was almost a relief after the drudgery of the winter. We crossed the Saar at Saarburg and rolled forward to hillside positions at Pluwig. Our stay there was made miserable by a daily schedule of enemy artillery fire that always managed to arrive during chowtime. Beshman's truck became a very unhealthy place to be caught eating—it seemed to be a magnet for shells. From here, we traveled due north beyond Trier to Riol and "shrapnel hill". Here the enemy not only had a daily artillery schedule, but had broken it down to an hourly affair.

How we dug and dug, never being satisfied until our hands were but stumps of their former selves. Again, it was a relief to be called back to Trier for a stretch in SHAEF reserve—eighteen hours worth—just long enough to clean an entire barracks for someone else. To reach the Rhine, we crossed back over the Saar; recrossed at Saarlautern, and pushed off on one of those "rat races" which reminded us of the old days in France. Confusion was the normal state of affairs. Prisoners became so numerous that it was not an uncommon sight to see a dejected looking Kraut standing along a road in the "Hande och" position trying in vain to get himself captured while vehicle after vehicle went racing by. And those wretched, half-human, displaced persons who, immediately after being freed, would start the long trudge homeward using the center of the road. Fortunately, we had a rest period of several days before crossing the Rhine—to use for cleaning ourselves and our equipment. We amused ourselves traveling over the countryside in captured Wehrmacht vehicles—usually fourteen men to a vehicle.

The first opposition that we encountered after crossing the Rhine was a warehouse at Hochheim containing thousands of bottles of champagne and sparkling burgandy. Champagne was stored in all available space in the

armored cars and bantams. This unexpected booty took the edge off our thirst during the race toward the next river objective, the Fulda.

On the 31st of March, Lt. John R. Wood, a very popular officer, was killed in action together with his driver and radio operator, T/5 Edwards and T/4 Maryanov. Lt. Wood's armored car was on the point. Just outside the town of Beenhausen, a small enemy patrol sighted our convoy and fired upon it. The exact number of men with this patrol is not known. The turret gunner, T/5 Bostic, fired on the enemy but was not sure whether or not he hit any of them. Later, when the platoon, along with a tank platoon of "F" Company, searched the town, no trace of the patrol was found.

The other two platoons proceeded through Beenhausen on reconnaissance and met slight enemy resistance. This resistance, although light, caused the loss of vehicles and some casualties.

The next day, April 1st, the first platoon was given the mission of taking the town of Rotenburg. We had been warned by radio to expect trouble and we were ready for it, but still when it did happen, we were caught unawares by the suddenness of it. It happened near the town of Wustefeld, on a road that led straight to Rotenburg. There were woods on both sides of us, except for about 20 yards on our right which was open ground. The platoon leader's armored car was point. The first thing we knew was that a few enemy bazooka teams opened fire, but instead of hitting the vehicle, they blew up alongside and kept pushing the car to the left until finally, the vehicle got wedged between two trees and couldn't extricate itself. At the same time, a bazooka blew up alongside the bantam in back and wounded all three men. One German opened fire with a machine pistol and wounded another man. One man in the point armored car was hurt in the meantime. As this was happening, the rest of the troop and "F" Company moved back out of the line of fire, except for one tank which stayed to give covering-fire to the boys that were pinned down. We all made a rush for a house about 300 yards down the road, and the tank kept us covered. As soon as we reached the house, the tank opened fire on two German tanks down the road. We made the civilians in the house give first aid to the wounded men. Then a report came over the tank radio to pile everyone on the tank and try to make it back to the rest of the outfit. When we reached the spot where the armored car had been knocked out, we all opened fire on the Germans still in the woods and finally made it back. The casualties including Sgt. Greenstein, who had made the patrol across the Saar River and T/5s Trejo, Garfinkel and Pfc. Gatto and Lotta were taken to the rear.

It was at Rotenburg that we first hit really good "ghouling" country. From here to Austria,

"ghouling" became an art, which was studied by all men, and so perfected that it became a standard operation. When a platoon entered a town, the burgomeister would be contacted at once and instructed to order the citizens to turn in all swords, shotguns, rifles, pistols, and cameras, as they were considered to be dangerous in civilian hands. In the meantime, a few of the boys who could speak would be on patrols for chicken yards and eggs. Egg eating became almost sickening.

And so we "ghouled" our way across Germany—almost to Czechoslovakia, before cutting due south . . . until one morning as the mist cleared, we saw in the distance, the breath-taking sight of the rugged, snow-capped Austrian Alps reaching toward the sky. We traveled parallel to these peaks for three days to Steyr in an attempt to contact the Rus-

sian forces. Whole armies of German and Hungarian SS men were disarmed and started back toward the rear. Each of us collected several pistols for souvenirs. Finally, when the Russians failed to appear, we cut into the mountains and it was among the beautiful Alps and lakes that we ended the war.

In the period between the war's end and our return home, we enjoyed the fruits of victory. At Weissenbach on Attersee, we swam, sailed, motorboated, rode horses, set up bars (with liberated liquor), and in general, did as we wanted. For a brief time, we went deeper into the Alps to look into the Tito affair, but found the English had things under control. We then started the long road home, back to Le Havre, France, which was almost where we had come in. A vicious circle.



Matkoff



Harrison, Williams, Page,
and Maitland



Lt. Henry C. Boren



T/5 Goneau, Pfc. Page, Cpl. Williams,
Pfc. Maitland, Pfc. Semski



Lt. McCreary



Lt. Fred McLaughlin, T/5 Jacobs (in
turret)



Lt. Stuart



Gorno, Novak, Johnson, Trann, Sharp



Maitland, Johnston, Brown, Allen,
Goodwin, Newman — Untertrauen,
Austria



Lipsky



Gates, Lt. Hennessy



Rosenberg



Twardy



Novak — McCarthy



Danube River



Alpers



Medalis



Marinof and Novak



Malys



3rd Platoon



Middleton and Ricchuttio



Days, Green, Lipsky



Lt. Hennessey



Haase, Walker, Matkoff



Jones



Gillenwater



Capt. Downing — C Troop Commander



Capt. Downing, Bownes



Lt. McLaughlin, Lt. Moriarty



Lt. Moriarty, Jacobson



Ricciuto



Cox, Baldwin



Petroski, Maryan



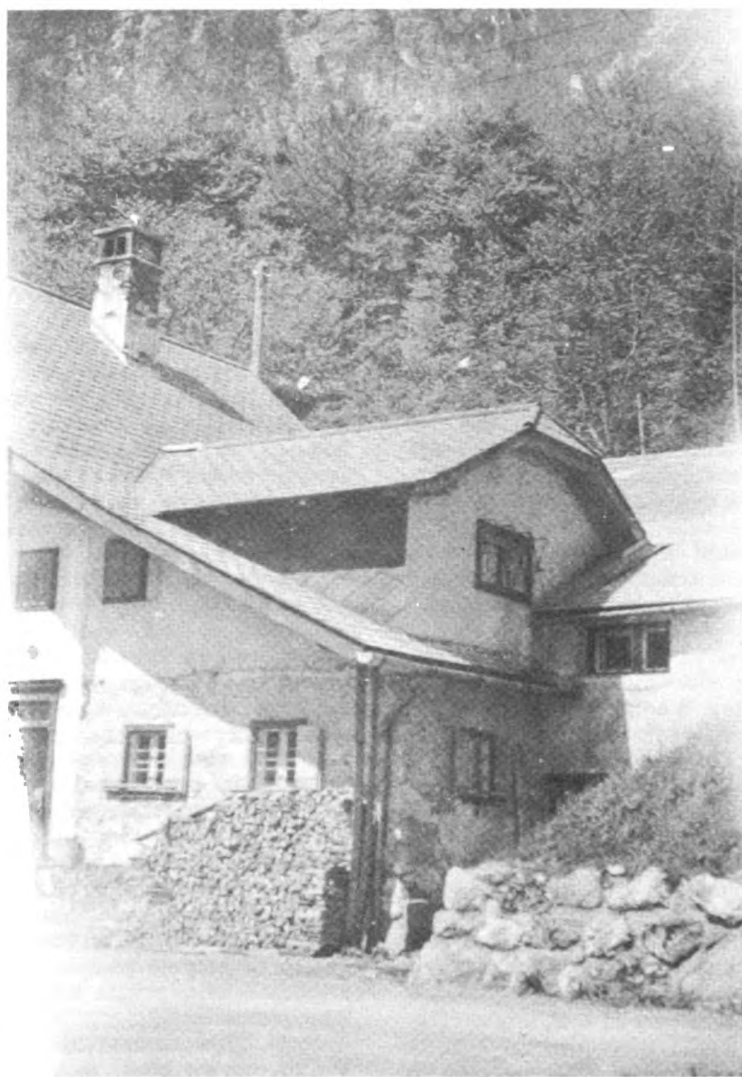
Morgan, Raybent



Petroski



Petroski, Gates



C Troop — Weisenbach, Austria

THE HISTORY OF "E" TROOP

Under the command of Captain George C. Fullenkamp, E Troop outfitted in England with all or nearly all the necessary tools for waging war, was unleashed upon the German Army on the eleventh day of August 1944. That day is sure to be remembered by the Germans that were in the vicinity of Martigne, France.

The first action with an actually living enemy the troop encountered was when the Headquarters section of the 1st platoon ran into a road block trap at a little hill and curve just outside of Jublains, France. They were in search of a new CP site. This mission carried the half track and its personnel into this supposedly clear country. Finding suddenly that it wasn't and that those people meant business shouldn't have surprised them but nevertheless it did. Everyone became a bit excited when the "peck, peck", and crack of bullets began hitting the armor and going overhead. The vehicle came to a screeching halt when the firing started, the slow process of turning a half track around on a narrow French road began. Thanking God the enemy had nothing larger than rifles and machine guns they made it around and headed back only to find the road again blocked by a farmer's cart and a half made road block of teller mines. The men were firing back just enough to aggravate Jerry while the driver was taking a chance of straddling the mines and dodging the cart. Luckily the whole operation was completed successfully and the half track with six men holding their breaths and sweating with excitement raced back down the road a mile before anyone dared relax. That was the first taste. No one hit, no one hurt, the fog out of the rifle bores and an experience each man said was as rough as they ever wanted again. Later they were to find that was a mild exposure to the trouble Jerry could make.

The next few days saw all three platoons attached to Group Headquarters for securing the Group activity. We set up outposts or should I say strong points on all the main roads behind us across our sector moved the armor and Infantry toward Le Mans.

Soon we were actually on our way, the race across France as it was called by everyone, (but us of course) had began. We didn't call it a race because it was a slow costly project to us. The platoons were being shifted rapidly from one Rcn troop to the other and each was getting the same amount of activity in the forward elements.

The next action worthy of mentioning happened to nearly the entire troop in the vicinity of Orleans, France. The first platoon being at that time attached to one of the Rcn Troops who were hitting no resistance great enough to commit the assault guns, missed this and I'm sure hold no regrets. "C" Troop with Hq.

section, the 2nd and 3rd platoons of E Troop were caught in a trap around a blown bridge. Although the Jerry's force was much smaller than was ours they caused much excitement and confusion among us and forced the long column to turn around and reconnoiter a by-pass.

The entire troop was again assembled on an airfield near Orleans, France the next night and everyone caught some much needed rest. The chase from the hedgerows to the wheat country had us all out of breath.

From our bivouac near Orleans we could see the town of Chateaudun burning in the darkness creating quite a spectacle.

Next day we moved up again to a town called Neuville aux Bois. Everyone thought maybe another day's rest and wine was in store so a few went into the town on sort of a pass; attended the French church; caught a few souvenirs, and loaded down with wine returned very early. This was a short period of relaxation for the men learned shortly that their present position was only a jump off for another long haul.

That night at 0200 a task force was organized from the 3rd Squadron. To seize and hold the bridge across the Yonne river at Sens, France was the mission, and it proved to be a bit of fun for everyone. Plenty of action around us; the 1st platoon of E Troop supported the 1st platoon of B Troop which was the leading element. The 2nd platoon of E Troop in support of C Troop was flank and rear security, and the 3rd platoon was attached to A Troop to secure the right flank. The point (1st platoon of E, 1st platoon of B) jumped off at daybreak, and raced through woods and fields on narrow highways for fifteen miles before anyone looked back. Resistance was nil. The only trouble encountered was the ever present, well meaning, French with their bottles and glasses, offering information about anything you could name. They are credited with one worthwhile deed that speeded our advance however, the repair of a bridge at Beaulieu La Relonde, one the Germans had made ready for demolition. The French had gathered lumber and stacked it nearby for us, it was simply a matter of a little fire-fight by the point Bantam a few minutes at the bridge, and we were again on our way. It was at this point that we had our first beer since leaving the U.S.A. A good Frenchman donated five bottles to the lead half track. On the flank the third platoon had their fun too picking up Lugers and pistols of various models from a group of bicycle troops. They brought along a bicycle or two with their prisoners. The second platoon at the right rear caught a Volks-wagon unaware and hit it with an HE shell. As far as we know they are still looking for the wheels and top.

Along about four o'clock in the evening the point came around a curve on a hill to see Sens nestled quietly in the valley. It cer-

tainly looked anything but hostile to us but later we looked at each other to remark about the deception.

We entered the town and were on the bridge before all hell broke loose. There were Jerries of all makes, models and descriptions, shooting from windows, from basements, from roofs and from church doors. The curious French equally as surprised as the Jerries were massed on each street and were taking the guns from the wounded Germans and using them on the next greycloth uniform they saw. E troopers were seen shooting from one hand and drinking the offered wine with the other. The mission was accomplished; the bridge secured by the units following, and the task force pushed on to a town near Villeneuve. Our prisoners were counted and turned over to an armored division PW cage. An overnight rest in the rain that started at 1900 was next.

It was here that the French egg trader learned a lesson about trading with E troopers. One lad, as the story is told, was bartering for eggs and brown bread to supplement our rations and to provide a change of menu. He held out a large piece of chocolate; the Frenchman laid out two eggs. He pulled back the chocolate the Frenchmen put out two more eggs. He started to put it back in his pocket; the Frenchman put the rest of the dozen. The lad picked up the eggs, pocketed them, broke his chocolate bar in half for payment, and made off amid the confused shouts of the astonished traders.

From Villeneuve into Nogent. The first platoon was attached to troop A who were in turn attached to Group Headquarters reserve which moved back to Fountainbleau for a couple of days. The Troop Headquarters, 2nd and 3rd platoons closed on Nogent to prepare for our chase to Epernay.

Our stay in Fountainbleau was an enjoyable one. Some of the men had dates, others just admired the greatest congregation of girls since America was left behind. It was here too that we saw evidence of the French hatred for collaborators. Many demonstrations were seen of the head shaving sort. We were amazed at the demonstrations, but provided no sympathy for the victims.

The 1st platoon returned to the Troop at Nogent in time to get into the point again for the drive to Epernay on the Marne. The champagne center of France had a bridge we needed as well as a few choice brands which we wanted to sample. The drive started about 1000 in the morning. We over-ran nearly all the enemy in the way. Those we didn't over run we passed so fast they didn't see us. Lt. Callahan's platoon was faster than E Troop's half tracks and assault guns so he ran off and left us completely. Contact was again gained at the town of Aviges by radio which reached them from there. We found them trapped in the town of Epernay. We rushed to the hills outside town where the valley could be seen.

The Jerries had already destroyed the bridge, but nevertheless our trapped troops had to be saved. All targets were taken under fire by us and soon A Troop made a successful run to safety. The mopping up was turned over to the 4th Armored Division which took very good care of the situation. (Just a note here: the Champagne was delicious too.)

Verdun was our next major city. We stopped at a point ten miles east of it on an airport near the town of Rouvres, remaining there for three days. The second platoon received a mission to support Lt. Eddy's 2nd platoon of A Troop in Rcn to Metz. This mission proved to be quite a battle. Col. Drury the Group Commander was captured here when the Jerries stopped our reconnaissance with a barrage of artillery. The second platoon entered the barrage in an attempt to save him but was unsuccessful. During this battle the troop headquarters 1st and 3rd platoons, were moved to a bivouac near Chambley. This proved to be a vacation for us. A great chateau with a beautiful park was there for us. The servants for the place still occupied their quarters. Shortly the second platoon joined the troop, and we all relaxed for a few days.

The Polish lads really had a time here for the servants in the chateau were Polish forced labor. The Germans had converted the gardens and grounds into a chicken and vegetable farm. Our Polish speaking people, through some superior diplomacy, established good relations and thus obtained several wonderful chicken dinners and some genuine home cooked potatoes. It really hit the familiar chord for us.

Our next move proved to be our roughest operation to date. We moved to a sector of woods and brush near Gravelotte: established a line, and prepared to hold it. The elements were our toughest enemies. Mud, forests, rain and the exposure for a month really had the men ready to get back up in the dry vehicles and move again.

The town, Gravelotte, was abundant with souvenirs, chicken and enemy artillery fire. The outposts in the town had their share of all finding out how easily a soldier can adapt himself to a situation. I'm sure there were no cooks in the gun platoon, but fried chicken was on the menu three times a day. We thought it well prepared and of wonderful flavor.

Our contact patrols were tough jobs in this sector. They ran at each odd numbered hour every night. Jerry caught up with us, ambushed one at 0300 one morning, and wounded two valuable key men. After that we used armored cars for transportation instead of the quieter bantam. It never happened again.

The 3rd platoon at this time was included in the task force to attack Ft. Driant. The operation was unsuccessful, and again some valuable men were injured.

From Gravelotte we, a grateful lot, left

for Hayange to hold a section of the Moselle river line. The Troop went into a battery position in Schrenlange, living in a kinder-garten school for a while. It was certainly a contrast to the miserable conditions that we had just left. We had passes into Hayange, shows, and some social activity. Our appreciation knew no limits.

Firing indirect fire at a range of six thousand yards by a unit who were out of practice was almost too much for us, we started training and practicing. Within a week we had our fingers back so well that Jerry ran instead of walking casually to his foxhole on the other side of the Moselle.

Amid farewells from the natives of Hayange we departed for Famek. We were on the same type of mission, and again we had the Troop in a battery position. We settled comfortably within view of Jerry on the east bank of the Moselle, and stayed for nearly a month. We made many of the enemy uncomfortable with our nightly harassing fire, and in the daytime made exact registrations on everything that moved or looked suspicious.

Our next move took us into lower Luxembourg for a short visit. From there we crossed the Moselle and proceeded up the east bank toward Trier. Because of the Siegfried Line we had to stop. And then we stayed in the vicinity of Perl, Borg, Wochern and Sierck for a long time. Here we became pretty well settled. Fired lots of ammo and had lots of fun. Passes back to Paris started here. The house in Luxembourg City that was maintained for rest and recuperation provided much enjoyment for us. I think every man made at least one visit to that fair city. Had both Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners in Perl. Those were as enjoyable as was possible to make them. The German homes that provided the china, crystal and silverware were a hastily vacated lot. We assembled all our service, and really set up a banquet. Each platoon tried to set the best tables. The pictures of those tables would have been wonderful souvenirs. It was positively amazing. At Thanksgiving Jerry must have known that we didn't want to be bothered as he started at 11 o'clock with single rounds of artillery. Kept it up until two o'clock sprinkling the entire area. None were close enough to hurt a thing but the noise became troublesome and interrupted our conversation at dinner.

The Saar river was our next obstacle. We went into a battery position just outside the town of Welling, Germany. Souvenirs were plentiful in this sector. Jerry kept the town on the very bank of the river too hot to reconnoiter in the daylight so when we wanted to look over new piles of junk we waited for a foggy day or went in at night. This procedure proved successful for no one was ever hurt.

About this time the Troop changed commanders, Lt. Lee C. Kelly assumed command, and Capt. Fullenkamp was made S-3 at

Squadron Headquarters.

At the first signs of spring we crossed the Saar river and moved deeper into German territory, to stop again on the Ruwer River just south of Trier. Then we jumped past Trier for a short stay in the town of Longuich on the Moselle.

Knowing the big push to the Rhine in our sector was about to start, we kept our vehicles and bags packed. We moved south to Saarlauten where we crossed the Saar again. From there we hardly caught our breaths before we closed in on Mainz on the Rhine. Here our first cameras started coming in. Some nice ones were collected. It was too bad that they had to be destroyed as many of us would like to have kept them.

The maze of rivers and abundance of Germans in this area slowed our progress. It was only a matter of only a couple of days until we had crossed the Oppenheim bridge on the Rhine, Hochheim on the Main and was poised for another parade. This time the parade was to stop where the Russian Army started.

Just as we were beginning to get accustomed to a Jerry supply of canned milk, new champagne, etc., our orders to move came. A short visit at Frankfurt and our noses turned toward Kassel. It was a rather uneventful run. Picked up a few PW's pistols and a lot of trail dust. The only action worth mentioning was on the Fulda river near Rotenburg. A few German light tanks offered opposition from the other side of the river. Their fire didn't bother much but the light Anti-Aircraft guns did heckle with their air bursts. After breaking a few windows and giving Heinie a good headache we entered the town.

Here we found an SS School that provided some good snooping but nothing more.

After moving into Kassel for a few days our direction was changed and an attack to the east began. At this time we started seeing a change of heart in the German people. People standing at the roadside tossing flowers to us, offering wine and cognac or schnaps, and some were whining to us for help against the hungry liberated soldiers of ours and our allies who were taking food to stop their hunger. How we could sympathize with them no one seemed to know, so we didn't try. To have helped them under such conditions seemed to rasp every "E" trooper.

On out the Autobahn we went to Chemnitz and traversing some beautiful terrain on the way. The apple trees of Germany were in full blossom at this time to impress us and make us wonder what Germany might have been before this war started.

It was on this trek that we passed Weimar (the Buchenwald Camp) a never, never to be forgotten place. No one enjoyed much of any part of the country after witnessing this. Everyone carried a grim and amazed look for some time afterwards.



Metz



Green



Wysocki



Sabirai

Near Chemnitz we went into a town called Meerane and relaxed somewhat in some beautiful homes. Thinking all the time our next stop would be Dresden and the "Russkys". While there our mission was changed and we all moved to the south to make the cross-country march from Hersfeld to Burglengsfeld. On this march Easy Troop really had a time. There was almost a battalion of German PWs on the vehicles at the termination of the march. Everyone pulled in tired, hungry and cross. I for one wouldn't have been bothered if ten battalions of Germans had knocked upon my door with their surrender papers in their hands. I know one Haus Frau whose jams and jellies suffered as direct results of my hunger.

After being relieved by the Infantry that followed closely behind us we crossed the bridge and proceeded on to the Danube. We drew harassing fire from the Flak Batteries surrounding Regensburg almost continuously for two days. Regensburg was too well fortified for our force so we were again relieved on the outskirts by the Seventy First Infantry Division. We then moved to Worth on the Danube to await our chance to cross on the bridge being prepared by the Engineers.

By this time most of our guns were continuously dropping from the convoy and causing much trouble. We turned them in for new at this time and setup our CP in Sunching, Germany for a week or so. The Squadron moved ahead. We eventually moved back to Regensburg where 3rd Army Headquarters was our Rear Echelon while there and our move was primarily to be near the depot where

our new guns would be coming in. Here we stayed until about the fifth of May 1945.

Our next move was to Mattighoffen in Austria. A beautiful little town nestled in the foothills of the Alps. Snow capped peaks could be seen in the distance. We annexed the best house in the town for our quarters. Maintenance of vehicles and personnel appearance with a bit of playing around occupied our time until V.E. Day. Everyone had this chance to relax and enjoy some tennis, experiment with photography and catch a few fish.

After V.E. Day we moved to Austria resort country and received the job of clearing all the German Army out of that territory. We found the detail a rather interesting and enjoyable one. Our CP was located in Gmunden on the bank of Traunsee Beaches, beauties, boats and very little battle helped make our stay one to remember. Many were impressed by the fact that most of the people, the homes, the streets, etc., were almost like America. It was here we saw our first lighted streets since we left the USA. It was quite a thrill to come over the hill into Gmunden and see the rows of lights after traveling for a year in blackout. Our first noticable indication that the war was behind us.

From Gmunden our travels took us from Radstadt, to Roab to Camp Lucky Strike and subsequently Le Havre and home.

With visions of jungles, Chinese and Japanese and mosquitoes of enormous size we happily accepted our thirty days of temporary duty at home.





Kortz, Farris



Valentine and "Beaucoup"



Gilliland, Ficek, Littleton, Green



Froelich, Anderson,



Long



Harris, Geracca, Grant, Glasson,
Leinberger



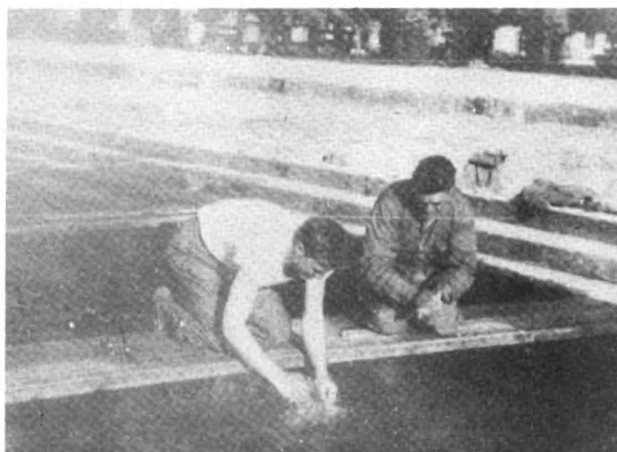
Troop CP near Radstadt



Unter Travern



Sabirai, Algood, Albaugh



Froats, Hanning



First Sgt. N. H. McCormick



Froats and Froelich



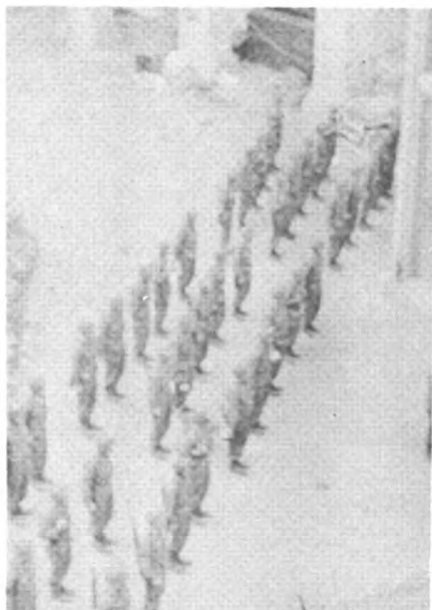
E Troop "clean up" Austria



Weiss, Long



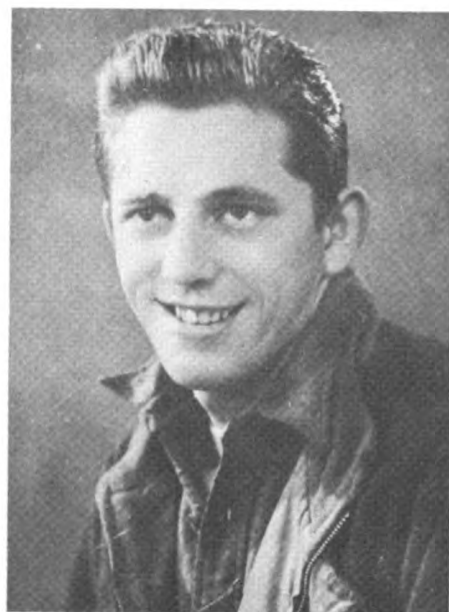
Matusiak



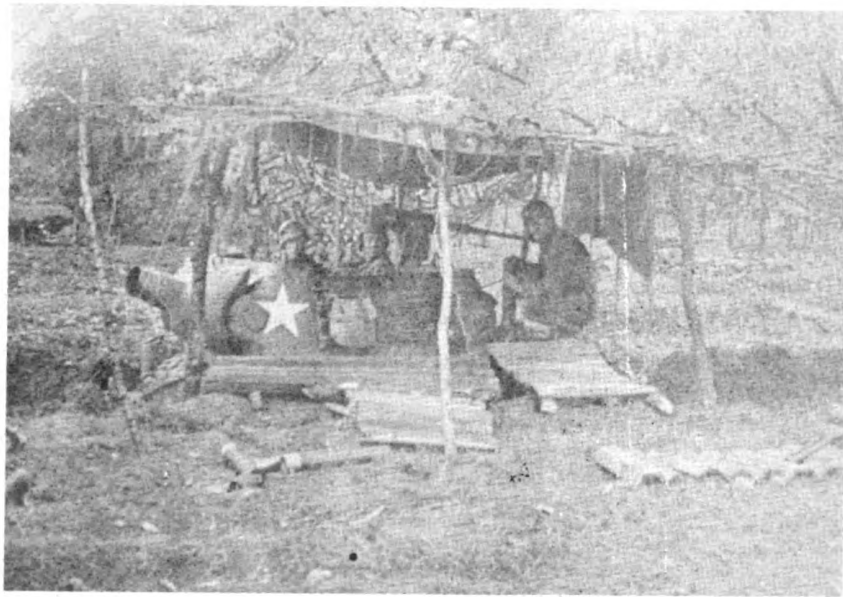
Reveille at Kammer



Lt. Zimmer



Rubeck



Assault guns at Gorze



**Jeziorski, Glasson, Jackson, Harris,
Lt. Burns**

THE HISTORY OF COMPANY "F"

On the 11th of August 1944 we had our first encounter with the enemy at Martigne, France. "B" Troop was out ahead with our company in support. Nearly all of "B" Troop rolled through the town before they hit enemy resistance, which came from well-concealed machine gun nests. "B" Troop was forced to withdraw under the intense fire. But as they tried to leave the town, other German positions opened up on them. Immediately our tanks were called upon to release them from the pocket they were in. Within a couple of minutes our guns had subdued the enemy fire enough to release "B" Troop's men from the trap. The entire task force withdrew to a point about two and one half miles west of Martigne where we bivouacked for the next three days.

The day's events had shaken the men up a little and that night, there was a constant chatter from the machine guns of the guards who were firing at anything and everything.

Three different times during the following day, Lt. Garbowit led the 3rd platoon to the outskirts of town and as many times was forced to withdraw under intense enemy fire.

During the following week, the company advanced east with the rest of General Patton's Third Army.

On the 20th of August, the 1st platoon was attached to "C" Troop with the mission of protecting the right flank of the 4th Armored Division. The 2nd platoon was attached to "B" Troop with the mission of spearheading for the 4th Armored. It was a cold, drizzling rainy day when the two platoons left Neuville-Aux-Bois with their respective troops at 0300. It was the first really tough mission assigned to our company. The men were tense and nervous. The 1st platoon of "B" Troop, commanded by Lt. Jackson and S/Sgt. Baker led with the 2nd platoon of our company, commanded by Lt. Huggins and S/Sgt. Hanson, in support. Everything went well until the point reached the outskirts of the town of Suippes where the point was fired upon by enemy machine guns which were evidently trying to protect the bridge across the Suippes River. The tanks were called up and a hasty reconnaissance was made by the platoon leader and the Squadron Commander. The Free French reported the bridge had previously been prepared for demolition, but the night before they had cut all wires and removed the charges. After the reconnaissance was completed, the 1st section of tanks moved up as far as the bridge and laid down heavy machine gun fire on any place they thought the enemy might be; no return fire was received. The 1st Section then proceeded across the bridge to the edge of town while the 2nd section covered them. Entering town, the 1st section received no enemy fire and observed no enemy activity, so radioed for the reconnaissance platoon to

come up. The 1st platoon of "B" Troop then continued on its mission through town. On the east side of the town they learned from French civilians that the small force which was holding the bridge had withdrawn a few minutes ahead of them. A mile or so from town, the point was again fired on by machine guns and riflemen. Fortunately, none of our men were wounded. The enemy lost at least one man killed, several wounded and four captured. This encounter lasted only a few minutes and the mission continued without resistance until we reached Sens. The liaison pilot, with whom we were in contact, reported large enemy forces in Sens, but the information was indefinite as to type and composition. The original mission was to secure the bridge intact across the Yonne River and establish a bridgehead on the other side. Lt. Jackson's platoon crossed the bridge and entered the edge of town where he received small arms fire. The tanks followed up and helped in knocking out the enemy fire. As soon as the tanks were across the bridge, they received a change in orders. They were to continue the advance through town as far as possible. Lt. Jackson's platoon and one tank went down the main street, with two tanks on the street to the left, and two tanks on the street to the right. The enemy was caught completely off guard and were trying to escape in cars, trucks, motorcycles, and even bicycles. The two platoons advanced through the city killing over a hundred and knocking out several vehicles without having a single man killed or wounded. Then they went to the outskirts of town to try to prevent the enemy from escaping. In the meantime, the 1st platoon, under the command of acting platoon leader, S/Sgt. Van Slyke and Sgt. Bringard, which was attached to "C" Troop, had advanced east on the right flank of the 4th Armored Division to a point about eight miles south-east of Sens where they encountered the enemy and drove them back. Their mission of holding the cross-roads in the flank position was accomplished. Several Germans were killed or wounded and twenty-one were captured. Sgt. Rosen was seriously injured in action and evacuated to the hospital.

Three days later, the entire company was once again together at Barbey.

The 28th of August found the Squadron once more on the move, this time with the mission of spearheading for the XX Corps to capture a bridge intact over the Moselle River. Our company was held in Squadron reserve. After taking Verdun, the entire Squadron ran out of gas and had to bivouac two miles north-east of Etain in a captured German airfield. Captain Brennan and 1st Sgt. Wakefield did a little reconnoitering in the wooded area around the airport and discovered several well-camouflaged German bombers, full of gasoline. Our tanks were gassed with enough left over for most of the Squadron.

Within the next couple of days, our company made several moves which brought us to the vicinity of Abbeville.

During the afternoon of the 6th of September, the 1st platoon of our company was assigned the mission of rescuing Col. Drury. S/Sgt. Van Slyke set out on foot to reconnoiter the area for Col. Drury, but was pinned down by small arms fire, so he assembled the 1st platoon tanks. He then led the platoon to the high ground north of town where they laid down a heavy barrage of machine gun and artillery fire, enabling Lt. Col. Wallach and Captain Brennan to return safely to the town. Reassembling in town, Captain Brennan gave S/Sgt. Van Slyke orders to take his tanks and two others to reconnoiter the shellhole for traces of Col. Drury and his party. S/Sgt. Van Slyke's and Sgt. Lauth's tanks had hardly started before they were hit by a heavy barrage of German artillery. The third tank, commanded by Sgt. Bringard, managed to return to town and set up a counter-artillery barrage enabling the two crews to return to town, under intense mortar, machine gun and small arms fire. As it was getting dark, the platoon was forced to evacuate the town, because German infantry was reported to be reentering the town. The remainder of the platoon returned to the vicinity of Abbeville; Col. Drury was a prisoner of the Germans.

For the next few days the company was temporarily assigned to the 43rd Cav. Rcn. Sq. to help defend against a counter-attack which was expected in the vicinity of Cheniers. While attached to the 43rd, the company participated in taking the town of Longuyon, which was held by several German tanks and an unknown number of infantrymen. The German tanks retreated when they learned we were superior in number, leaving their infantrymen behind. They were soon overcome. In Longuyon our men had their first opportunity to see how the Free French treated French collaborators. Of course you know what happened to the men. As for the women, the Free French cut all their hair off leaving them as bald as billiard balls!

After several days with the 43rd, the company returned once more to the 3rd Cavalry in the vicinity of Gorze.

For the following month, we were in the forest in the Metz area, near Fort Driant; in mud ankle deep, pulling routine patrols and outpostting certain wooded areas. The bivouac area was constantly under heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire. Four men were lightly wounded in action. Nearly every day it rained, which was, of course, slowly undermining the morale, even though the Heinie artillery couldn't do it.

Finally, after a nerve-wracking siege in the forest, the company was relieved by elements of the 90th Infantry Division. After leaving the forest, we had our first showers in over a month. It was also our first opportunity to

give the tanks a much needed over-hauling and our guns a complete check. Even while in this so-called "rest" period, we were on a 30-minute alert. Fortunately, nothing came up to interrupt the badly-needed rest for the men. When the company got march orders on the 16th of October, the tenseness had disappeared.

After leaving Moyeuve Grande, the company moved to Uckange, on the banks of the Moselle River. The town was under heavy enemy artillery fire for the first week that we occupied it. For the two weeks the Company was in Uckange, we outpostted that section of the Moselle which had been assigned to us by Squadron Headquarters. Frequent patrols were sent out. One afternoon Captain Brennan was ordered to send a patrol across the river under cover of darkness to capture a prisoner and obtain information as to the type, strength and composition of the enemy forces in that vicinity. Captain Brennan asked for one officer volunteer and four enlisted men. Lt. Garbowit, Watkins, Sakowitz, Butts and Fiumara volunteered for the mission. The first night the patrol crossed the river. After reaching the opposite bank, they advanced a few yards inland where they observed a mine field. The patrol then lay in wait for nearly two hours, but observed no enemy. Then they returned to the command post. On the second night, the same men volunteered. This time they advanced through the mine field, which they found to be a dummy, until they reached a point nearly 300 yards inland. Waiting in ambush again for nearly two hours and observing no enemy, they again returned to the command post. Captain Brennan was ordered once more to send a patrol over the Moselle on the same mission and again the same men went. This time they advanced even further inland to an old house, which they thought was being used as an enemy outpost. Again they lay in ambush. Still no enemy appeared. Finally, they threw grenades into the house: fired every weapon they had. Once again they lay in ambush expecting an enemy patrol to come searching for them. After waiting in suspense for another hour, they finally returned to the command post. Although the patrol had not captured a prisoner, they had furnished much-needed and vital information which helped the 95th Infantry Division to make a crossing at that point. All five men were awarded the Bronze Star for their heroic service.

After a hectic three weeks of patrolling and outpostting in Uckange, the 95th Infantry relieved us.

During the following two weeks, the Company was on the move from place to place. We advanced as far north as Burmerange in Luxembourg. Our mission in Luxembourg was to help repulse an expected German counter-attack in that vicinity. During our stay there, however, there was no encounter with the enemy. In reality, we actually enjoyed ourselves

—drinking beer in the immaculately clean cafes and having the opportunity to observe a little of the countryside of Luxembourg.

During the next few days, the company took several towns in that vicinity—inflicting heavy casualties on the Germans and capturing over a hundred prisoners. The Company advanced as far as the Siegfried Line, then had to take up a defensive position because of the strong fortifications of the enemy, which prevented further progress. We lost one tank. Pfc. Bernard Parker was killed by enemy artillery fire in Borg, Germany.

The month of December was one of the toughest and hardest periods the Company had while overseas. The Germans made two or three counter-attacks, which were repulsed by the Company. The Germans suffered heavy losses in dead, wounded and captured. The Company had one officer and seven enlisted men lightly wounded in action and nine enlisted men lightly injured in action. Several times during the cold miserable month of December, the Company had to send out combat patrols. They lay in ambush for hours at a time waiting for an opportunity either to bring an enemy soldier back alive or dead or to obtain information as to the type of enemy troops in the vicinity.

After we accomplished the first mission, the Company was assigned an even more hazardous patrol. Lt. Huggins and seven enlisted men went on the patrol. Each man was picked for his courage and skill in patrolling. Their mission was to penetrate deep into enemy territory, around Tettingen to observe the type and composition of the enemy forces in that area, to find out how their supplies were brought up, and if possible, to bring back an enemy soldier alive, or to kill one and bring back his papers and identification through the wooded area to Tettingen. The first half hour was without incident, then the patrol was pinned down for twenty minutes by two enemy machine gun nests. The patrol circled the enemy outposts and proceeded on its mission, but in doing so, three men were separated and returned to the command post. The remaining five men advanced approximately two and one half miles deeper into enemy territory northwest of Tettingen. Here, the patrol observed an enemy patrol of nine men. The patrol then went north for approximately a fourth of a mile and lay alongside a road and observed the enemy bringing supplies to their forward position by horse-drawn vehicles. After several minutes of observation, the patrol proceeded northwest for about 200 yards and was just crossing a little road when they were suddenly fired upon at point-blank range by an enemy machine gun nest. They were pinned down. Lt. Huggins decided the best way to get out at all, was to separate and go back individually. The wooded area all around the machine gun nest was heavily mined and booby trapped. As Lt. Huggins was

returning to the command post, he set off a booby trap and was lightly wounded in the hands and face. Sgt. Soleau was seriously wounded in action and Sgt. Sovich didn't return at all and was listed as "missing in action." The patrol was considered successful. The men on the patrol were badly shaken up, and were given three-day passes to go to the rear to recuperate.

On the 29th of January we moved to Wellingen and started the same duties of out-posting and patrol work. On the 9th of February the Company had to send a patrol across the Saar River with the mission of capturing a prisoner and finding out the type of enemy activity in that vicinity. The patrol was led by Lt. Van Slyke (S/Sgt. Van Slyke was given a battlefield commission for exceptional ability in handling men and leading them in combat). The patrol was made up of volunteers, consisting of Sgts. Shnider, Watkins and Fleming. The four-man patrol crossed the Saar River under cover of darkness with the aid of five Engineers who manned the assault boat. After crossing, the patrol moved north, parallel to the river for 300 yards. At that point, one enemy flare was observed from a pillbox about 150 yards east of their position. The patrol halted for twenty minutes and retracked 100 yards south. Moving east towards another pillbox, an anti-tank ditch was encountered a short distance inland. Three more enemy flares were shot off from the same pillbox as the first. Our patrol remained in observation at the anti-tank ditch. No enemy activity was noted around the pillbox or in that general vicinity. The patrol returned to the river and recrossed; and then moved south towards Ripplingen. Crossing an enemy unmarked mine field, four mines were detonated which resulted in wounding two of our men and five of the Engineers. Sgt. Fleming carried Watkins out of the mine field and then reported to Captain Brennan what had happened. Captain Brennan and Fleming reentered the mine field at great risk, and helped carry the other men out. Sgt. Shnider refused to be carried out until all the other men had been removed. Captain Brennan, Sgts. Fleming and Shnider were awarded the Silver Star for their outstanding courage and heroic action.

Shortly after the Company left Wellingen, Pfc. Robert E. Butts left on furlough to the States under the rotation plan.

During the next week, the Company crossed the Saar River and advanced East to Hockweiller, where the Company ran into a heavy enemy artillery barrage. Here, Pfc. Frank Obrockta and T/5 Robert Sakowica were killed.

Five days later, the Company was assigned the mission of taking the high ground north of Riol where we lost one tank and had five men lightly wounded. Pvt. Cantrill Meador was killed.

After holding the high ground northeast



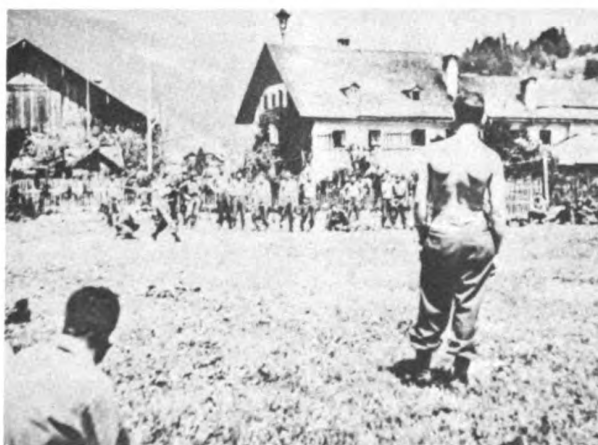
L. to R.—Harry Buckles, R. J. Specian,
Bowers, Schilling, Tommey



T/4 Frank Fiumara



F Company ready to mount before
crossing River into Austria



F Company plays Headquarters—
Radstadt, Austria

of Riol for over a week under constant heavy enemy artillery fire, Captain Brennan was ordered to make a breakthrough—further north-east of Riol.

One platoon of "B" Troop, mounted on the 1st platoon's tanks, with the remainder of the Company bring up the rear, moved from positions on the high ground. They soon met 88 mm fire from practically point-blank range. Shifting and traveling along the ridge of the woods in that vicinity, the 1st platoon advanced to another hill, where direct fire at point-blank range was again received from 88 mm guns. The guns were so well-concealed that a shell passed through the lead tank without the knowledge of the driver. The lead tank continued to roll, nearly over-running one of the guns before it was finally knocked out. The entire first platoon was knocked out by the very effective fire; Lt. Van Slyke, Pfc. Henry Melnick, Pfc. Frederick Kirkpatrick, T/5 Walter Kollman and T/5 John Teweilliger were killed in action, four men were taken prisoner, and eight men wounded. The platoon from "B" Troop suffered extremely heavy losses as well.

S/Sgt. Wysocki was one of the four men captured. He was herded with the enemy column retreating to the East the next day. Speaking fluent Polish, Wysocki, for three days argued with several enemy soldiers of Polish descent that they should surrender. Finally convincing them, they started to walk from a point approximately 83 kilometers east of Trier to our lines. When passing other German soldiers on the road, they hid Wysocki in their midst. Finally they reached an outpost of the 16th Cavalry, east of Trier. Wysocki returned to the Company at Ottweiler, Germany, on the 21st of March.

After the catastrophe on the high ground, northeast of Riol, the company was relieved by the 16th Cavalry.

For the next two weeks, the Company pushed east to the Rhine river where they crossed near Mainz on the 29th of March.

During the month of April, the Company pushed steadily east almost as far as Chemnitz. Then the Company had a change in orders and went south to the vicinity of Nurnburg. From there, they again turned east, with the mission of crossing the Danube River into Austria.

The Company advanced swiftly to the east, spearheading for the 80th Infantry Division. At Timelkam, Austria, the Company ran into SS Troops and lost one tank; Pfc. Harry Buckles was killed here and nine men were wounded. The enemy lost forty-two killed, twenty wounded and fifty-one prisoners. This was our last engagement with the enemy.

After spending two days in Timelkam, the Company again moved east to Ebensee, Austria, which was the most beautiful spot the Company had been in since arriving in Europe. It also contained the most horrible sights that any of the men had ever seen. Ebensee was surrounded by snow-capped Alps, with a sky-blue lake at one end. During free time, which we had little at that time, we were allowed to go swimming and canoeing. This was certainly a great relaxation for the nerves. As for the horrible part; Ebensee contained a concentration camp of 18,000 prisoners, consisting of political, Jewish people and Russian prisoners of war.

The prisoners had been virtually starved to death. Three hundred to four hundred were dying daily; either from malnutrition or abuse.

For over a week, the Company had charge of policing and maintaining order in the Concentration Camp and in the town of Ebensee.

While in Ebensee, S/Sgt. Bringard and Sgt. Rosen received "battlefield commissions."

On the 19th of May, the 3rd Cavalry celebrated its 99th birthday and was honored by the presence of the late General Patton, who gave the 3rd Cavalry a few words of praise.

The 14th of June found the Company en route from Austria to Le Havre, France; then homeward-bound to the States.





Lt. Bringard, Lt. Rosen



Capt. Brennan and "Jiggs"



"Duke"



Hutcherson



Sweet — Specian



Lt. Huggins and Mess Crew



Turret Right Capt. Brennan, Left Bonasick — Asst. Driver, Donald Rose, Driver, Penrod



Goldsmith, Odum, Vasquez, Price and Rams



Band



Mead

Erling Eckland



First Sgt. Wakefield



Cordrat — Marinof

THE HISTORY OF HQ & SV TR

At 1130 hours, 10 August 1944, the 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Mechanized, was given the mission of establishing contact with the First Infantry Division at Mayenne on the north and the 80th Infantry Division on the south of Evron.

Headquarters and Service Troop set up at Laval in the morning of the 10th of August and in the afternoon moved to Martigny. The S-2 officer, Captain W. Voores called for identification of enemy units and in turn, Captain McCracken "B" Troop Commanding Officer sent two fresh killed Krauts to the Squadron CP. While on guard T/5 James J. Cannarozzo and T/5 Richard L. Gaulie made their first killing of the war which day break revealed to be a huge tom cat.

Headquarters and Service Troop remained at Martigny for two days, and on the 13th of August moved through Montsurs, Sille-Le-Guillaume, Le Mans to Nogent. Sixty-two prisoners were received from the troops and all still believed that Germany would win the war.

On the 14th of August, Headquarters and Service Troops moved to a German Air Field Headquarters just west of Orleans. The German Staff had moved out so fast that their dinner was still on the table. The first Russians to be seen came into the camp saying "Ruski! Ruski!"

On the 14th of August, the 3rd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron was attached to the XII Corps and moved east of Orleans to Fay-Aux-Loges.

The Troop remained there until the morning of the 15th of August. During that time all personnel were busy cleaning weapons and securing extra gas, rations and ammunition. Little did the men realize that they were getting ready for one of the most daring dashes ever made in the history of our armies.

At approximately 0400 hours, August 1945, the 3rd Cavalry started moving eastward toward Sens and by mid-afternoon had marched approximately 85 miles through enemy territory, and gone 15 miles east of Sens. Hq & Sv Troop had for the first time come under the direct fire of small arms. The French did a great job in Sens by drafting all available cognac and wine. At that stage of the game, a good drink was appreciated by all.

Hq & Sv Troop remained at Les Clermoint for two days. During our stay at Les Clermoint an ex-French Marine, Henry Barrier, offered his services to the troop as an interpreter. Most of the men in the Troop looked upon this as a joke, for at the time, "Hank" was unable to speak English. It was surprising that in a short time, Hank had picked up enough English to prove his worth to the troop.

On the 26th of August, the 3rd Cavalry was released from the XII Corps and returned

to its parents, the 3rd Cavalry Group for further assignment.

On August 27th the Squadron moved to Nogent Sur Seine and, at daybreak of the 28th moved north towards Reims with the 5th Infantry Division, with the mission to seize and hold bridges across the Marne River. The forward elements set out, and reached the Marne. The entire group was assembled, reorganized and closed across the Marne the evening of August 29th.

The next mission was to by-pass enemy resistance and seize the bridges intact at Verdun. Meeting fierce enemy resistance and finding most roads blocked and mined, the Squadron pushed on and seized the Verdun bridge intact at 1545 hours.

Early in the day of the 1st of September, the 3rd Cavalry crossed the Meuse River at Verdun and set up at the air-field at Etain, where an acute shortage of gasoline had forced the entire 3rd Army to halt. Enemy bombers came over the same night with Verdun as the target, and it looked like a huge July 4th fireworks display. The best sight of all was Captain Robbins as he furiously dug a fox-hole. His pick and shovel moved so rapidly it sounded as though he were using a power hammer.

On September 5th, the 3rd Cavalry Group suffered the most disastrous blow of all, for on that date, Colonel Frederick W. Drury was reported missing in action while accompanying a platoon of "A" Troop between Rezonville and Gravelotte. Lt. Col. Wallach, accompanied by a platoon of tanks, went to the scene where Colonel Drury and his men had been fired upon, but found no trace of the 12-man party. Heavy artillery fire was met which damaged two tanks.

On the 12th of September, Lt. Col. James H. Polk assumed command of the 3rd Cavalry Group.

For the next two months the squadron remained on the west bank of the Moselle River occupying several villages. In November orders were issued to cross the river and relieve an infantry regiment. After a dark and dismal road march of one night's duration the division was finally relieved. And then again the 3rd made one of those "lightning" moves into Germany until stopped by Hitler's famed Siegfried Line which held us back during the long cold winter months.

Even though the minds and hearts of the men were 4,000 miles away, Christmas was made a gala occasion by the lavish dinner that was served in the Chateau that was being used as the CP. Turkey with all the trimmings was the menu for the occasion, and it was made even more complete by the Cognac and Vermouth which flowed so freely. Every man thought it was mighty nice of Hitler and his henchmen to provide us with such a bountiful supply. (Ah! We'll never forget the vineyards of Epernay and the ware-

houses full of Champagne, Cognac and Vermouth!) Nor will we forget the Christmas party held in the upstairs of the Chateau where the men had decorated a fir tree with colored paper and GI flashlights with the lens covered with red and blue paper. Doc DePierro started to drink a new bottle of what he thought was wine and it turned out to be vinegar! The real surprise of the evening came about midnight when T/5 McCarthy walked into the room and treated the thirsty men with three bottles of real, honest-to-goodness American made 7-UP! Judging from the manner that Fishman and Atkins staggered to their beds that night it appeared as though they had had the best time of all. Even though the enemy were shelling near-by the GI spirit of Christmas still prevailed.

On January 9th, the Squadron moved its CP to Grindorf. The living quarters were quite opposite from the Chateau in Perl and the men had quite a task cleaning the houses and barns of dirt to make their new home livable for this was supposed to have been a period of rest and rehabilitation. (What a joke that was; who ever heard of the 3rd Cavalry getting a rest in combat!) We did enjoy ourselves, however, when the Red Cross girls came up to show movies and to treat us with doughnuts and coffee. If any person ever deserved medals for bravery, those girls did.

It was from Grindorf that Task Force Vaughn set out to Kirch and Ober Perl where they worked with the 376th Infantry Division. It was at this time, too, that Task Force Vaughn did such excellent work at Butzdorf, Besch and Tettingen.

On the 19th of January, the Squadron CP moved into Wellingen little realizing that it was to be their base of operations until March 1st. There, for the first time, did the 3rd look like the Cavalry of old when men availed themselves of the work horses that roamed the streets and used them as saddle horses. As horsemen, it was a good thing for us that we were a Mechanized unit for most of the would-be Paul Reveres didn't know one end of a horse from the other.

We had quite a comfortable set-up in Wellingen complete with electric lights (thanks to Captain Robbins and his captured German power unit) but it literally went up in smoke when Fire-bug Olson was putting gas in the motor and set the barn on fire. No one who was present that night will ever forget Fireman Vaughan as he sat on top of the adjacent building and directed the spray of water on the flaming hay. The men themselves, with the hand-operated fire fighting apparatus did a commendable job of pumping water, too, but nothing could be done to save the burning barn. Why the Jerries didn't shell us that night will forever remain a mystery for the blaze could be seen for five miles away.

During our stay in Wellingen, the men were given three-day passes to Luxembourg

where Sgt. Sorenson was in charge of the "rest house" there. What a thrill it was to sit down in the beautiful restaurant in Luxembourg and be served by waiters while we sat at a table and ate from red chinaware on nice white tablecloths.

The GI issue of food in Wellingen became quite superfluous due to the delicious steaks on the hoof that roamed the streets. Galati served his apprenticeship as a butcher by killing and cutting up all the cows in sight, and the messengers and guards became famous for their cooking. Ah, those were the good old days.

All good things have to come to an end though, and we moved from Wellingen to Freudenburg on March 1st. What a shell-lacking that town had taken from allied artillery. We moved our CP into a bar room in a hotel and there wasn't a pane of glass left in the buildings.

On March 3rd, the CP moved to Hockweiler. What a muddy trip that was! Col. Wallach reported that we were coming under enemy artillery and mortar fire, and he certainly knew what he was talking about. Just before entering the town the fireworks began and it was a miracle that none of our men or vehicles were hit. One of the vehicles from another unit at the rear of the column was blown to bits. We remained in Hockweiler for several days under constant artillery fire, and it was there that we almost lost all of our staff officers. About three in the morning a direct hit from a German 155 mm hit the kitchen of the CP, and landed in Message Center. Olvey, Newberg and Fechan were on duty in the kitchen and miraculously escaped injury. Had the shell hit the upstairs of the CP it could have killed all of our Staff Officers who were sleeping on the second floor. One night, the enemy infiltrated through our lines and mined the road we were using to the rear. When T/5 Marshall came over the road, his truck was blown up when it struck a land mine that the Jerries had planted.

Our next CP was at Konz Karthaus and from there we moved to Kenn on March 10th, where we remained until March 16th. Many prisoners were taken during this period and T/5 Goerke proved his worth as an interrogator.

On March 16th, the Squadron CP moved again (readers, please don't become impatient; we have many more movements to show before we reach V-E Day). This time it was to Longuich, where we remained for two days. Then we began a wild march that took us through Neunkirchen, Homburg, back through Neunkirchen and finally ending up in Ottweiler on March 22nd. During that drive, we moved so fast and covered so many miles that we thought for certain that the Heinies had finally decided to surrender. Col. Polk called the unit together in Ottweiler and praised the men for their splendid achieve-

ments and also told us in no uncertain terms that there would be "NO FRATERNIZING."

We left Ottweiler on March 26th and moved to Kriegsfeld, and on to Mainz. If any man was in need of woolen socks before getting to Mainz, he left that town well taken care of. Gross upon gross of new socks still in boxes were found at the railroad station, to say nothing of the champagne in the town. Other allied units were in Mainz, but the good old 3rd Cavalry left with its share of champagne (another first for the 3rd).

Our next well-remembered CP was at Alsfeld on March 30th where we stayed at a lovely hotel or apartment. A small stream surrounded the building and it appeared to be set on an island. What a time the drivers had trying to maneuver their half-tracks through the narrow arch-ways. Times like that made the drivers wish that someone would steal the trailers from the tail of their vehicles. On April 1st, the Squadron moved to Rotenburg where the men really began their collection of cameras, pistols, knives and still more cameras. Everyone wanted to be the first American to pay his respects to the Burgemeister and it was a wild scramble even before the vehicles had stopped moving. The huge German Headquarters building was still intact and it was an amusing sight to watch the Liberated Poles scrambling from one room to another gathering up the useful articles left behind by the Germans in their dis-organized retreat.

The next CPs in order were: Sand on April 3rd, Ehrsten on April 4th and Korle on April 6th. Several men took pictures of Chaplain Brennan as he said mass at the railroad station in Korle for the troops. Father Brennan, as he was known to most of his boys, constantly subjected himself to danger in order to hold services for the men and he was an inspiration to everyone.

Leaving Korle on April 8th, the CP moved to Laudenbach, Grebendorf, Pfaffschwende, Ballstadt, Kirchheulingen, Tennstedt, Sommerda, Kosen, Osterfeld, Hermsdorf and finally along the famous Autobahn highway into Meerane on April 15th. In Meerane we had the loveliest CP of all. It was a large chateau owned by a wealthy German manufacturer, and the men slept across the street in another beautiful home. Rear echelon joined us in Meerane and their CP was down the road from Squadron about 200 yards. Throughout this time, "GHOULING" was in full swing in every town, and the men, by this time, had acquired

cameras and pistols beyond their fondest dreams. Practically every man possessed a Luger or P-38, and it was strange, indeed, to see some poor, unfortunate individual still carrying a carbine as his personal weapon.

Subsequent marches brought the Squadron CP to Hersbruck on April 21st, and it was from here that we made our famous march to Berlangenfeld. Over roads that were torn up and through almost impassable fields of mud, we marched all day and into the night. Enemy artillery was dropping along the entire column and we were forced to remain in the woods that night before reaching our destination. No one will ever forget the miserable night we spent in all the rain and cold. Major Vaughan and the men worked tirelessly attempting to extricate the vehicles that were stuck in the mud. Many were the men that night who had thoughts of home where there was a soft bed and clean sheets to sleep on. Instead, we huddled together in the vehicles trying to sleep and keep warm but to no avail.

The following morning we entered Burglengenfeld after the bridge over the Naab River was captured intact.

Again, subsequent advances brought us to Worth on the 26th of April and we knew that our next mission would be to cross the Danube River. The Engineers were on the job building a pontoon bridge and we crossed at 0930 on the morning of April 28th. We had always heard that the Danube looked blue to people in love, but we must have been filled with hate, for when we crossed over, it was a turbulent stream of muddy water. Following this maneuver, we set up the Squadron CP at Sunching on April 29th.

We advanced to Essenbach on May 2nd and on to Mitterskirchen the following day. On May 4th we added another country to our growing list when we crossed into Austria where we established our Headquarters at Timelkan. The following day we made our CP at Steyr in which town there was a large German hospital.

On May 6th we moved into Gmunden little realizing that this was to be our last CP before V-E Day. We set up operations in the beautiful Hotel Swan and thought ourselves in Heaven as we were assigned rooms with real beds and linens with all the comforts of a hotel in America.

On the night of May 7th, the street lights of Gmunden were turned on and we knew that the War in Europe was over.



Atkins



Blake



Geeham



English, Radonovich, Straniero, Manista, Wright, Maraganis



Capt. Witten, Capt. Vorhees



"Doc" Rihl



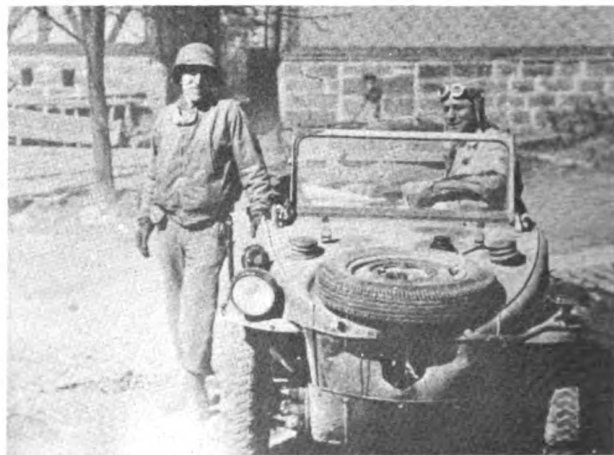
Sharp



Sabol, Buonocore



Pike and "The Chief"



Munaf, "Hank"



CWO Robidart



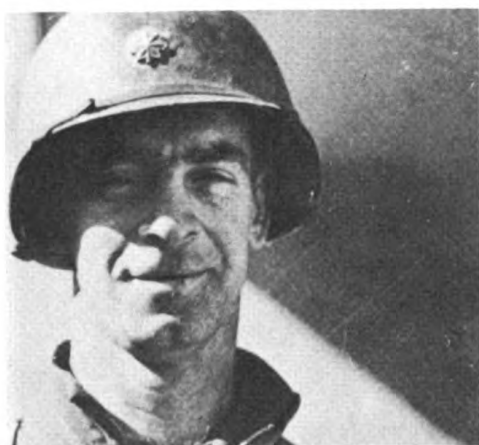
Col. Wallach in liberated vehicle



Brown, Reyburn, Miller, Hartjes, Mc-
Chesney, Marshall



Derenda



Attack at dawn, Maj. Vaughn



Pierson



Calvin Lucas





Maj. Marron



The Big Brass — Maj. Vaughn, Col. Wallach



Capt. Norton



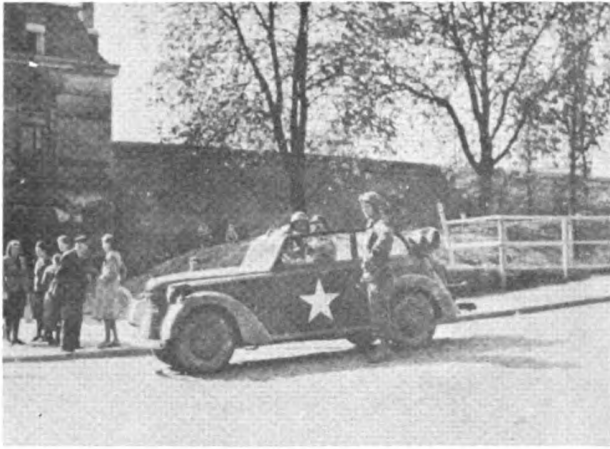
"Doc" Harris



Pierson, Geeham



Manista



Lt. Whorf and Air Corps Liaison officer



Myjakauski, Lang, Garfinkle



Pederson



Duvir



Sirianni



1st Sgt. Haggard



Geehan



Miller, Gehan, Sabol



Mr. Robidart, Pierson



Galati



Wright, Brenner



Hoffman



T/Sgt. McCarthy



Kazacos



Taube



McCarthy, Bennes, Caruso, Atkins



DePierro



Maj. George Fullencamp



Macoviak and "We-We"



Ward



Nelson



Sorensen



Chaplain Brennan



Macoviak, Voorhies



Antwright, Caruso, Janowski



Lt. Baker



Fehan, Sirianni



Michaels, Radonovich, Smith, Lecjar



Voochries and Johnson



Hank



William Miller



Newburg



Duck — Cassavino



Taube



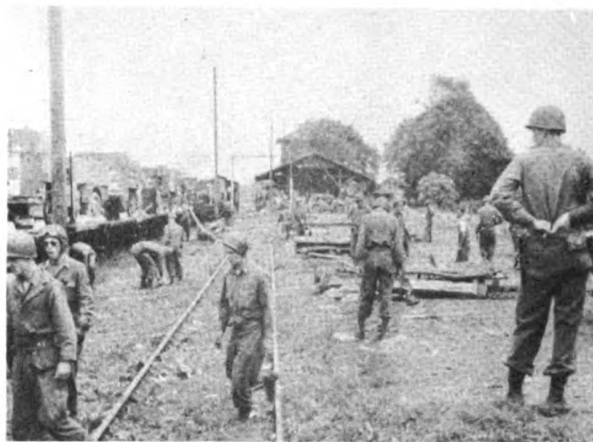
Michaels



Capt. Robbins, DePierro



Austria to New York



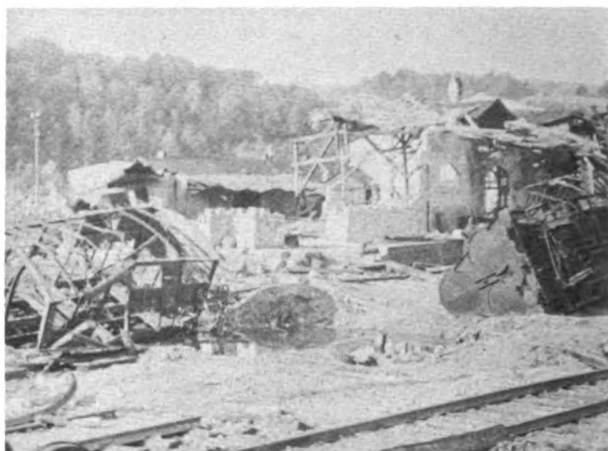
Maj. Cooke, Maj. Fullencamp



Lt. Delan, Lt. McCreary, Maj. Fullencamp



Game of Chance

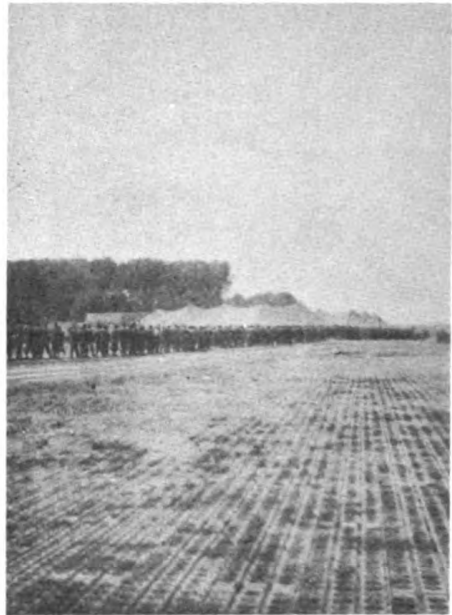
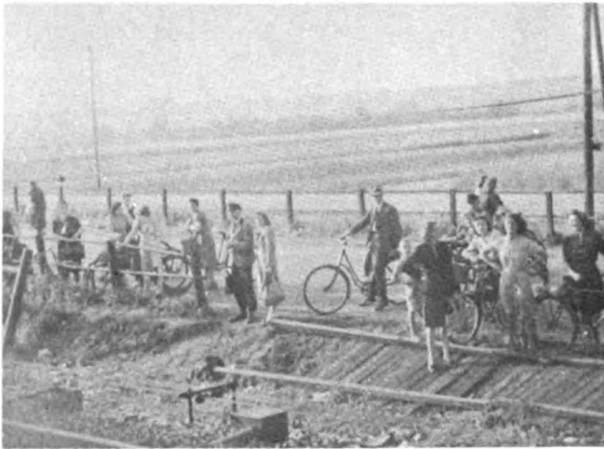


Lt. Jackson, Capt. Witten





2nd Platoon of "C" Troop



The doughnut line at Camp Lucky Strike



"Brass" at Lucky Strike



Loading at Le Havre



The homeward bound troopship



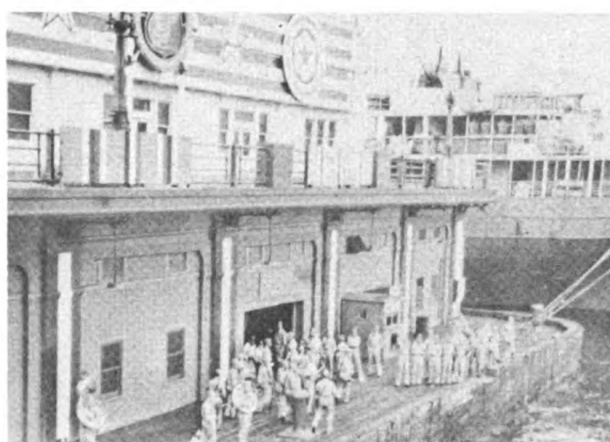
Shanks the Medic



Rams and Socia



Krotz and Farris



Arrival in New York





